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AUSTRALIAN AND BRITISH SOCCER WEEKLY AUSTRALIAN AND BRITISH

AUSTRALIAN AND BRITISH

SOCCER

VOL 17 No.773 - TUESDAY, MAY 14, 1996

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WEEKLY

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KNIGHTS TO HOST GRAND FINAL

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ERICSSON CUP - ROUND 33

TABLE

TOTAL

	Pts	P	W	D	L	F	A
Marconi Fairfield	60	33	17	9	7	58	35
Melbourne Knights	59	33	17	8	8	50	28
UTS Olympic	59	33	17	8	8	55	41
Brisbane Strikers	57	33	17	6	10	54	35
Adelaide City	54	33	15	9	9	65	40
Sydney United	54	33	14	12	7	47	33
West Adelaide	53	33	16	5	12	49	43
South Melbourne	46	33	14	4	15	50	56
Canberra Cosmos	35	33	8	11	14	48	61
Morwell Falcons	35	33	9	8	16	35	65
Wollongong City	20	33	5	5	23	31	63
Newcastle Breakers	17	33	4	5	24	35	77

HOME

	P	W	D	L	F	A
Marconi Fairfield	17	11	4	2	37	19
Melbourne Knights	16	10	3	3	25	7
UTS Olympic	17	12	4	1	30	13
Brisbane Strikers	16	12	3	1	45	12
Adelaide City	17	9	4	4	39	15
Sydney United	16	9	3	4	29	15
West Adelaide	16	11	1	4	25	16
South Melbourne	17	10	3	4	34	23
Canberra Cosmos	17	6	7	4	28	20
Morwell Falcons	16	6	5	5	19	22
Wollongong City	17	3	3	11	18	28
Newcastle Breakers	17	3	5	9	25	38

AWAY

	P	W	D	L	F	A
Marconi Fairfield	16	6	5	5	21	16
Melbourne Knights	17	7	5	5	25	21
UTS Olympic	16	5	4	7	25	28
Brisbane Strikers	17	5	3	9	9	23
Adelaide City	16	6	5	5	26	25
Sydney United	17	5	9	3	18	18
West Adelaide	17	5	4	8	24	27
South Melbourne	16	4	1	11	16	33
Canberra Cosmos	16	2	4	10	20	41
Morwell Falcons	17	3	3	11	16	43
Wollongong City	16	2	2	12	13	35
Newcastle Breakers	16	1	0	15	10	39

W WIN 3 Points - D DRAW 1 Points - L LOSS 0

RESULTS

MARCONI FAIRFIELD 2
(Hristodoulou 52, Maloney 64)MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 2
(T Podeljak 22, D Cervinski 35)BRISBANE STRIKERS 1
(Farina 43)
SYDNEY UNITED 2
(Lamond 84, Moric 89)

CROWDS (After Rd 33)

SEASON BEST: 13,956 - South Melbourne v West Adelaide - Round 9
ROUND 33 BEST: UTS Olympic V Brisbane Strikers 9,324 TOTAL ROUND 33: 37,279
SEASON TOTAL: 859,732. AVERAGE PER MATCH: 4,342

UTS OLYMPIC 0

ADELAIDE CITY 1
(Menillo 72)

Back from injury

BY BOB BROOKS

If any club wishes to appoint a top Coach, now is the time. Mike Johnson an extremely successful member of the Australian coaching ranks is available for hire.

In NSW he took the then Avala, now Bonnyrigg White Eagles, to the Super League Championship, the Grand Final Premiership, and the Waratah Knock Out Cup all in the one season of 1992.

Recently he guided Auburn to two consecutive promotions in some way regaining part of their past glory.

He won the Charity Shield with St George, was the man in charge when Sutherland gained promotion to the Super League and coached Wollongong United to a Grand Final win.

The now defunct Fairy Meadow, on the Illawarra coast, made it to the Super League with Johnson's urging.

Mike enjoyed many years of professional football in England before emigrating to Australia in the 1960s. He numbers Premier League experience with the mighty Newcastle United and the once famous Fulham as well as a stint with Brighton amongst his accomplishments.

Johnson had a motor vehicle accident a couple of years ago. His superb fitness enabled him to make a full recovery despite 21 broken bones. He's waiting to once more lead a club to glory.

MIKE JOHNSON
SEEKS COACHING
POSITION
IN SYDNEY

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AUSTRALIAN & BRITISH SOCCER WEEKLY

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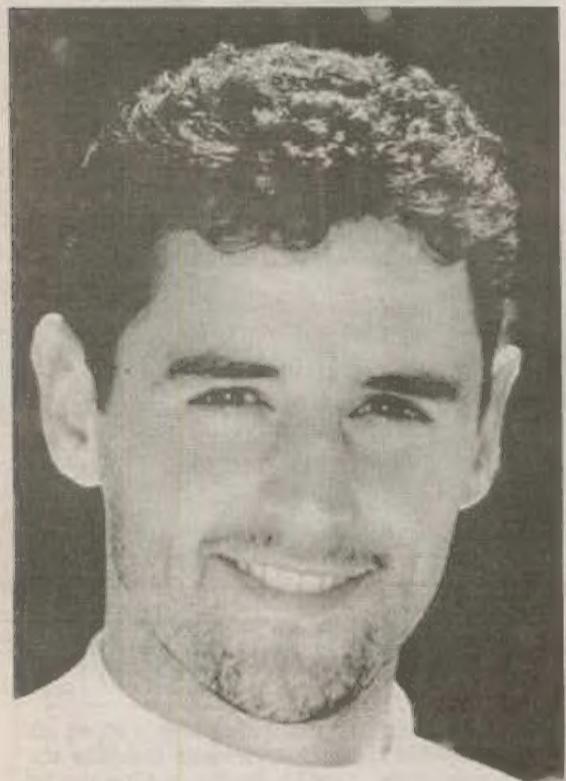
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ATLANTA '96 AUSTRALIA's OLYMPIC TEAM OFF TO THE USA

BY JOHN ECONOMOS

THE AUSTRALIAN OLYMPIC squad flew out of Sydney yesterday afternoon (Monday) in high spirits bound for Indiana, USA, where coach Eddie Thomson has arranged two warm-up matches.

The first game is planned for this Sunday against the USA Olympic team to be



KEVIN MUSCAT: Australia's Olympic skipper.



played at the Kuntz Stadium in Indianapolis.

A second game could also be scheduled against a regional side before the Australian squad moves on to face the

second-placed team from CONCACAF on May 26th in the away leg.

Australia's home leg has been scheduled for June 2nd at the Sydney Football Stadium.

The winning team over the two legs will be the 16th nation to qualify for the Atlanta Olympics.

At a special farewell press conference held yesterday morning in Sydney just prior to the Olympic squad's departure, Australia's captain and sweeper, Kevin Muscat, told ABSW: "They will be valuable warm-up matches Eddie has arranged for us.



"These two hit-outs will bring all our players together including re-uniting us with our Euro-based players such as Mark Viduka, Paul Agostino, Gabriel Mendez, Hayden Foxe etc.

"We are eagerly looking forward especially to playing the USA team.

It's going to be tough qualifying for Atlanta so I hope that we can end up with the Canadians as our opponent in these last two qualifiers".

The Australian skipper went on to explain: "We would all hate to have to meet Mexico, especially because of the high altitude factor over there.

"It's a great shame that we have already lost Sean Cranney who had to drop out with an injury to his quad.

"And as far as Michael Petkovic our back-up goalkeeper is concerned, if needed in action he will do well.

"He's an exceptionally talented 'keeper.

"I've had plenty of opportunity to closely watch Michael in action playing for my club South Melbourne week in week out.

"He has performed extremely well for us since coming to Souths", ended Muscat.

Eddie Thomson's A-team is likely to be:

Goalkeeper: F.Juric.

Sweeper: K.Muscat.

Twin-markers: M.Babic and H.Foxe.

Midfielders: G.Lozanovski, P.Tsekenis, G.Mendez, A.Moric.D.Tiatto.

Strikers: M.Viduka and Joe Spiteri.

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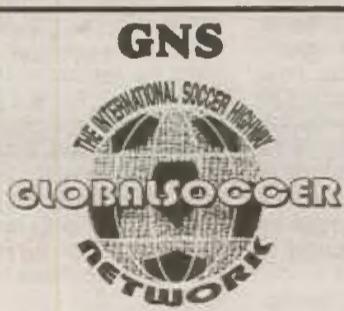
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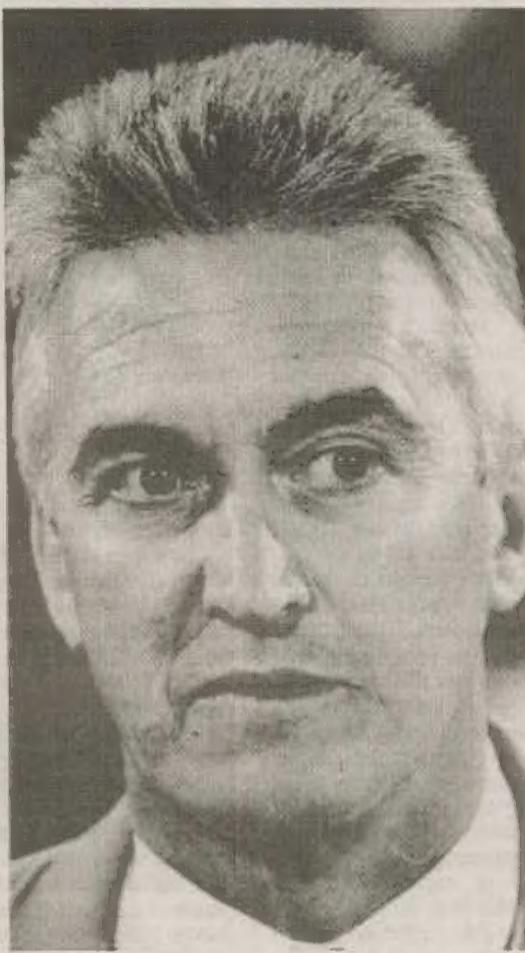
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EDDIE THOMSON: Australia's Olympic coach.

Sir Arthur's Golden Shoe Awards

BY JOHN ECONOMOS

SIR ARTHUR T. GEORGE, Australia's former long-serving Soccer chief, yesterday unveiled a prestigious scheme funded through the 'Arthur T. George Foundation Limited', whereby one outstanding player from each of our four national squads will be officially recognised and richly rewarded for their fine individual efforts on international arenas.

Sir Arthur stated yesterday (Monday) "I spent almost 20

years as Chairman of the ASF and 14 years on the Executive of FIFA and my one regret is that we didn't do enough to recognise the outstanding young players Australia has.

Later this year the inaugural winners for 1996 will be declared and presented with their awards at a black tie affair organised by Soccer Australia.

The judging panel will include national coach Eddie Thomson, his assistant Les Scheinflug and Australia's Olympic coach Raul Blanco.

These awards will acknowledge those young Soccer stars who represent Australia and do the game of Soccer and their country proud".

These four awards will be nationally recognised as the "Sir Arthur George Golden Shoe" awards and will become the premier national team awards and presented at an annual black tie Awards Night.

The Sir Arthur George Golden Shoe Awards will be established on the basis of the best and fairest player in each of the following national teams:

a) \$5,000 award for the outstanding senior national team player, presented annually commencing later this year.

b) \$4,000 award for the outstanding player in Australia's Olympic squad, presented every four years (each Olympic Games) commencing this year.

c) \$2,500 award for the outstanding player in the Australian Youth squad, presented bi-annually, commencing next year.

d) \$2,000 award for the outstanding player from Australia's Under 17s squad, presented bi-annually, also commencing next year.

Later this year the inaugural winners for 1996 will be declared and presented with their awards at a black tie affair organised by Soccer Australia.

The judging panel will include national coach Eddie Thomson, his assistant Les Scheinflug and Australia's Olympic coach Raul Blanco.

RELIVE THOSE MAGIC MOMENTS...



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STAR PROFILE

Matthew Bingley



Date of Birth: August 17th, 1971. **Birthplace:** Auburn, Sydney. **Previous Club:** St George. **Current Club:** Marconi. **Position:** Striker, centre-back, attacking-midfielder. **Nickname:** "Bingers". **Marital Status:** Single. **Occupation:** Courier. **Best Aspect Of Your Game:** Mobility. **Most Difficult Opponent:** None. **Most Impressive Local Player:** Brendan Renaud. **avourite Overseas Player:** Alan Shearer. **avourite Overseas Club:** Tottenham. **Euro '96 tip:** England. **What Qualities Make a Good Coach:** Must be able to communicate well with all his players. **Who Would You NOT Invite To Your Dinner Party:** No one. **Honours:** NSW U/11s, 12s, 13s, 14s, 15s, 18s, Australia Under 17s, Australian Youth, Australia. **Ambitions For 1996:** To win Grand Final with Marconi. **Ambitions After Retiring:** To remain healthy, wealthy and wise. **Most Memorable Moment:** Playing World Youth Championship semi-final against Portugal 1991. **Hobbies Outside Soccer:** Golf. **Best Goal You've Seen Scored:** My goal against Japan in Melbourne this year in the match which Australia won 3-0. **avourite Food:** Meat. **favourite Drink:** Beer or Scotch. **Car You Drive:** Holden Commodore V.R. **avourite TV Show:** The Footy Show. **TV Show You Refuse To Watch:** Current Affairs. **avourite Movie:** Scent Of A Woman. **avourite Actor/Actress:** Bruce Willis and Demi Moore. **Preferred Music:** Anything. **Least Preferred Music:** Rap. **avourite Comedian:** Robin Williams. **Pet Hates:** Bad refereeing decisions. **Special Advice To Young Players:** Work hard and stick to what you believe in. **Person You Would Most Like To Meet:** Mike Tyson.

BY JOHN ECONOMOS

VIDEO REVIEWS

Not always a world giant

Liverpool - The Official History

REVIEW BY BOB BROOKS

What a pleasure to sit down for an hour and a half to watch a well produced history of such a great club.

It wasn't always so that Liverpool were giants on the stage of the World Game. The narration by John Motson makes that clear.

Motson's quiet reassuring style brings emphasis to the important milestones in Liverpool's story. The early background scenes show supporters in their flat (or ratting) hats, bowlers and trilbies at Anfield in the 1920s. Contrasts will be noted by astute viewers to the 70s when headgear had all but disappeared and later pictures when baseball-style caps have come into vogue.

The Liverpool trophy cabinet is most impressive (obviously replicas of the Cups won have been produced for a permanent reminder to coming generations).

A picture of John McKenna, the prime mover in getting Liverpool moving

and active from 1892-1936, brings home how a great sporting club develops. There has to be an urge and driver. We learn that virtually all the team of 1892 were Scots. That team won the 2nd Division unbeaten!

1914 saw them in the FA Cup Final for the first time. Other firsts on the day —



the King was present and Liverpool's red shirts.

You'll learn that in 1928 fans on 'The Kop' would no longer get wet in rainy weather - because a roof was put over. 1929 brought an average of 40,000 supporters to Anfield.

Bill Shankly, Billy Liddell, Ron Yates, Bob Paisley, Kenny Dalglish all appear in footage, being interviewed.

Another first for Liverpool was in 1964 when they were featured on 'Match of the Day'. In that year the cameras focused on

the crowd. They are pictured and heard singing a great all-in-unison version of The Beatles song, 'She Loves You, Yeah, Yeah, Yeah.'

Kevin Keegan was such an important part of the Team at Anfield. At one point it appears that the video is a tribute to this great character.

For Australians you will see Craig Johnston score his historic Cup Final goal.

J.W. Smith Chairman of the Board best sums up the Club, "We are modest, we don't talk, we don't boast, we are very professional."

A worthwhile addition to any sporting library.

All three of these well-made videos are available from major department and leading video stores.



Liverpool stars: Kevin Keegan and Emlyn Hughes.

Goals, goals and more goals!

Match of the Day - Seven Goal Thrillers

REVIEW BY ROBIN RICKETTS

This video shows the seven goal matches that have featured on BBC's well known show. From 7-0 results to 4-3. From Manchester United starring George Best to

Colchester in the (old) fourth division. This video revives memories such as Gary Lineker playing for Leicester, Cyrille Regis for West Brom and Paul Mariner at Ipswich. This is not just a procession of 35 yard blockbusters or embarrassing bloopers. The one common factor is seven goals but each game, each goal, is so interestingly varied. Very enjoyable.

90 years in 90 minutes

The official History of Manchester United

REVIEW BY DAVID WRIGHT

Ninety years of Manchester United in ninety minutes - mathematically neat, of obvious footballing relevance but hardly enough scope to do justice to the most glamorous football club in the world.

As an avid United fan of over 40 years, I volunteered to review the Official History of Manchester United.

The date on the review cassette was 26 April 1996, but in fact the video was the BBC's 1988 production written and narrated by John Motson. I already had a copy and had seen it several times, but not for some time. With any luck, I thought, they will have updated it to cover United's triumphs of recent years. No such luck!

Understandably, film coverage of the early years is limited, but there is just enough to present a sketch of Newton Heath, the first great United side just before the First World War and some of the early characters like Charlie Roberts, Frank Barson and the legendary toothpick-chewing and smoking Welsh wizard, Billy Meredith.

The interwar years were quiet, depressing, and devoid of any major success for United. A bombed out Old Trafford and a new manager

without experience hardly seemed to offer much better prospects when football resumed after the Second World War in 1945, but in Matt Busby, United had found a shrewd Scot, with both exceptional leadership qualities and great vision.

Busby built not one, but three great teams. The first, in the late forties and early fifties, was built around Irishman Johnny Carey and included such names as Crompton, Aston, Chilton, Cockburn, Mitten, Pearson and Rowley. They won the 1948 Cup Final and after finishing runners up four seasons out of five, finally clinched their first League title in forty years in 1952.

The second great team was, by then, already in the making. It was to become known as the Busby Babes. They won the League twice, just missed out on the double in 1957 when they lost goalkeeper Ray Wood to a reckless challenge by Aston Villa's Peter McParland, and made United's first sorties into



European competition.

As all who know anything of English football will remember, it was the venture into Europe that resulted in the vast majority of that

youthful team dying on the tarmac at Munich Airport in February 1958. I must be one of the few people in the world who doesn't remember where they were when President John F Kennedy was assassinated. But I know exactly where I was that lunchtime when a friend handed me a copy of the Daily Mirror with the terrible news of the Munich air crash.

The video does not and could not entirely recapture the emotion charged three months that followed, culminating in the new team's appearance in the FA Cup Final against Bolton Wanderers. The video does very poignantly illustrate the way it touched so many in the segment from a packed Old Trafford when 60,000 fans listened in total silence to a recorded message by Matt Busby from his hospital bed in Munich.

The European Cup became Busby's Holy Grail. With Munich survivor, Bobby Charlton, record signing Denis Law and home grown George Best, Busby was to achieve his ambition on a memorable Wembley night in the summer of 1968 against Benfica.

Little did most fans realise but that night was the beginning of the end of one of the most illustrious periods in English footballing history. Following Busby was always going to be difficult. Many were to try and while Tommy Docherty and Ron Atkinson had the occasional success with FA Cup wins, the League title was to elude the Red Devils for more than a quarter of a century.

The cruellest blow of all was left to United favourite, Denis Law who had left the club on a free transfer and returned across the city to Maine Road. With characteristic impudence, Law back heeled the goal that sent his former team mates into the Second Division for the only season in the half century since the end of the Second World War. Law's muted reaction to the last goal of his illustrious career said everything.

The biggest disappointment for me watching the 'Official History' was that the producers have not taken the opportunity to include more footage of the legendary Duncan Edwards. Much is said about him by contemporaries but little is seen. He did play for England 18 times and appeared in the 1956/57 Cup Final before he lost his two week battle for survival after Munich, so there must be footage about.

The video should be compulsory viewing for anyone who loves football, its traditions, its delights and its moments of tragedy, frustration and despair. For those brought up in a world of colour television, action replays and satellite coverage of the most mundane of events from anywhere in the universe, it may not be sufficient. For the more recent converts to the United cause, the absence of material covering the triumphs of Alex Ferguson and the fifth great United side, will be a huge disappointment. Notwithstanding these shortcomings, all true United supporters will have this video in their libraries.

STAR PROFILE

Angelo Costanzo

(Adelaide City)



Date of Birth: May 9th, 1976.
Birthplace: Adelaide.
Previous Clubs: Salisbury United, E.D.Azzurri.
Current Club: Adelaide City.
Position: Midfielder.
Nickname: "Chocka".
Marital Status: Single.
Occupation: Cabinet-maker.
Best Aspect Of Your Game: Work-rate and skills.
Most Difficult Opponent: All of them.
Most Impressive Local Player: Milan Ivanovic and Craig Foster.
avourite Overseas Player: Del Piero and Baresi.
avourite Overseas Club: Juventus.
Nation To Win '96 Euro Championships: Italy.
What Qualities Make a Good Coach: Communication skills and discipline.
Who Would You NOT Invite To Your Dinner
Party: Dino Mennillo
Honours: Australia Under 20s, South Australian State team.
Ambitions For 1996: To win League Championship with Adelaide City and become a regular with the team.
Ambitions After Retiring: Coaching and to relax.
Most Memorable Moment: Winning the 'Sergio Medal' award and debut for Adelaide City.
Hobbies Outside Soccer: Tennis and basketball.
Best Goal You've Seen Scored: Marco Van Baston's in Euro '88.
avourite Food: My Mother's cooking.
avourite Drink: Water.
Car You Drive: The 'Gemi'.
avourite TV Show: Seinfeld and Italian Soccer.
TV Show You Refuse To Watch: Neighbours.
avourite Movie: The Godfather.
avourite Actor/Actress: Al Pacino and Demi Moore.
Preferred Music: Top 40.
Least Preferred Music: Country and Western.
avourite Comedian: "Booski" (Brad Hassell).
Pet Hates: Slow right-hand drivers.
Special Advice To Young Players: Train hard and listen carefully to your coaches.
Person You Would Most Like To Meet: Del Piero and Baresi.

BY JOHN ECONOMOS

GOOD OIL • GOOD OIL • GOOD OIL

BY JOHN ECONOMOS

South Melbourne plus the newly-admitted club to next season's Ericsson League Collingwood Warriors, have still not given up hope of snaring the South Australian living coaching legend, Zoran Matic.

It appears that after coaching the 'Black and Whites' of Adelaide City for ten consecutive seasons, and having been in complete retirement from Soccer the whole of this current season, the master-coach could be in the frame of mind for a come-back to the coaching ranks next season.

But when contacted last night by 'Good Oil', all Zoran could say was: "I have missed it and I feel I'm still young enough and eager enough to do a job for another season or two. I just don't really know what to do".

NSW Super League club Leichhardt Tigers last week confided to "Good Oil" that it was about to sell one of their top players to Portugal but did not want the player's identity disclosed as yet.

The Portuguese club urgently want the player across to them for a two-week trial.

The player of course is none other than the Tigers' elastic goalkeeper, Frank Mikuletic.

"Good Oil" last week disclosed how SOCCER AUSTRALIA's phlegmatic Chief Executive Officer David Woolley was expected to be inundated with lucrative offers by large sporting manufacturers wanting to take over from 'Adidas', as official suppliers of the Green and Gold strips to all our four national squads.

People from both Lotto and Asics are very keen to sign up.

But now we find that all THREE suppliers, have also targeted three top Ericsson League clubs seeking to have their players to also wear their strips next season.

Who are the three goalkeepers nominated to take out the 'Goalkeeper of the Year' award at next week's Annual Awards night dinner in Melbourne?

Adelaide City's Jason Petkovic, Melbourne Knights' Frank Juric and Wollongong City's Brett Hughes.

Wedding Bells are ringing and ready to clean up two prominent Ericsson League Sydney sweepers. Marconi's marker-cum-sweeper Paul Souris is getting married on June 22 to his sweetheart Olivera. The couple will skoot off to Bali for their honeymoon.

But Milan Blagojevic, Sydney Olympic's sweeper, couldn't wait and got himself hitched last week-end to Melina whilst out serving a suspension.

Both defenders now start serving a life-time

suspension.

Adelaide City has easily converted their local Liberal M.P. Joan Hall into becoming a staunch 'Black and White' girl.

Last season Ms Hall extended enormous personal assistance in helping to plan the pre-Grand Final festivities against the Melbourne Knights at the Hindmarsh Stadium. Since then Joan is sold on the Adelaide City team.

So much so, Ms Hall even travelled to Sydney last week-end to encourage Johnny Perin's young team in their Sudden Death Semi 1-0 win over high-flying Sydney Olympic.

The Annual Awards Night to be held this year in the LATROBE THEATRE at The World Congress Centre in Melbourne next Tuesday evening, has some pretty strong names put forward as candidates.

Out of the five leading nominations, no less than four are strikers all lining up to shoot for the "Players' Player of The Year" award ("Warren Medal").

They are Damian Mori and Craig Foster (Adelaide City), Kris Trajanovski (Sydney Olympic), Paul Trimboli (South Melbourne) and Frank Farina (Brisbane Strikers).

Strange that Sydney United's cultured sweeper and skipper, Tony Popovic couldn't make the Top Five.

The Under 21s Player of The Year award sees Jimmy Tskekinis (West Adelaide), Robbie Enes (Sydney United), and the scintillating, red hot right-midfielder, Tommy Podeljak (Melbourne Knights) all in contention.

Sitting on the bench and looking to snare the 'Coach of the Year' award are three former Australian World Cup players in Johnny Perin (Adelaide City), Manfred Schaefer (Marconi) and David Ratcliffe, (Sydney Olympic).

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Due to injuries to his team Johor, Darren was shifted by his coach from the sweeper's role to that of striker.

After nine League matches, Darren has scored 4 goals to become joint second top goalscorer in the League.

Stewart is held in such

esteem that he now has also been named as captain of Johor, the first time for a 'foreigner' in Malaysia.

The other Aussie goalscorers in the Malaysian League are: Jose Irirate 6 (Negri), Stewart with David Mitchell 4 (Selengor), Gus Cerro 2 (Negri), Scotty Ollerenshaw 1 (Sabah).

Leading the Comp is Negri who has Cerro and Iriarte. In third place is Sabah who have Ollerenshaw, 4th spot is Selengor who have Mitchell and Mehmet Durakovic. In 6th spot is Johor with Stewart, 8th are Malacca who have ever-green midfielder Josip Biskic and way down in 14th spot are Pahang with former Australian World Cup defender, Alan Davidson.

Darren Stewart

Tommy Podeljak, Melbourne Knights' brilliant pacey right midfielder, earned the crowd and media's sympathy last Saturday night at the Marconi Stadium.

As soon as Tommy scored the Knights' spectacular opening goal in the 22nd minute, the young attacker was understandably totally overcome and engulfed with delirious joy.

Racing towards the bench, young Tommy emotionally exploded by pulling his shirt over his face momentarily before finally taking it right off his body to celebrate his glorious strike.

But alas ... within seconds of doing so, referee Eddie Lennie marched across and flashed him with a yellow card because it's against the rules.

The referees are NOT to blame as they are only strictly policing a FIFA rule.

But surely this idiotic rule is aimed at turning our players into robotic instruments? How totally insensitive is it?

We saw the same thing happen earlier this season at Leichhardt Oval when Olympic's marksman Kimon Taliadoros scored, raced across field stripped his shirt off and waved it to the crowd.

Doesn't our Soccer need all the colour we can get?

Surely. Imagine for just one second what would have happened at Wembley Stadium last Saturday night when big Eric nailed the FA Cup with his glorious late strike to seal it for United.

The powerful Frenchman raced to the sidelines to explode his joy to the crowd.

Had Cantona been booked it would have totally soured the entire spectacle, would it have not?

STAR PROFILE

Dino Mennillo

(Adelaide City)

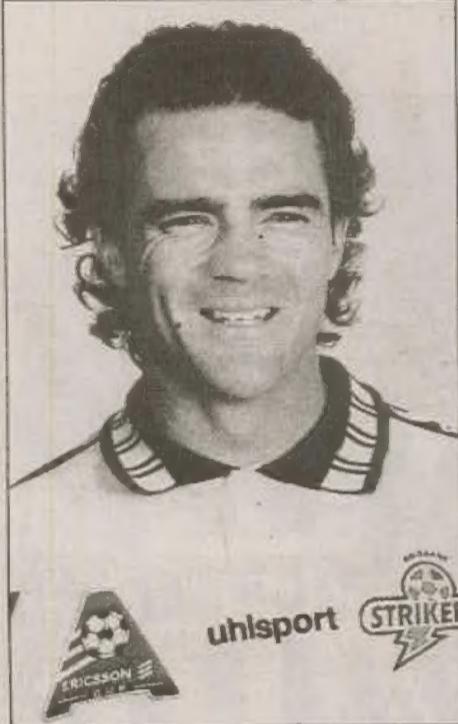


Date of Birth: August 22nd, 1975.
Birthplace: Adelaide.
Previous Clubs: Croydon Kings.
Current Club: Adelaide City.
Position: Left midfielder.
Nickname: "Dins".
Marital Status: Single.
Occupation: Student in studies of Occupational Therapy.
Best Aspect Of Your Game: Crossing.
Most Difficult Opponent: The Doctor (Milan Ivanovic).
Most Impressive Local Player: Craig Foster.
avourite Overseas Player: Eric Cantona.
avourite Overseas Club: Napoli.
Nation To Win '96 Euro Championships: Italy.
What Qualities Make a Good Coach: Communication skills.
Who Would You NOT Invite To Your Dinner
Party: "Chocka" (Angelo Costanzo).
Honours: Australia's 1995 World Youth squad, A.I.S. 1992.
Ambitions For 1996: To win the Ericsson League Championship with Adelaide City, and to maintain my position with Adelaide City.
Ambitions After Retiring: To work overseas and possibly coach.
Most Memorable Moment: Winning the title in the 1993 S.A. High School Championships with all my friends.
Hobbies Outside Soccer: Golf, tennis and movies.
Best Goal You've Seen Scored: Diego Maradona's second goal against England in the Mexico 1986 World Cup Finals.
avourite Food: Italian and Thai.
avourite Drink: Berocca.
Car You Drive: Holden Commodore V.P.
avourite TV Show: E.R.
TV Show You Refuse To Watch: Home and Away.
avourite Movie: Scent Of A Woman.
avourite Actor/Actress: Al Pacino and Marissa Tomei.
Preferred Music: Rock and Classical.
Least Preferred Music: Techno.
avourite Comedian: Brad ("Boo") Hassell.
Pet Hates: Getting fined at training and seating next to "Chocka" on the plane.
Special Advice To Young Players: Believe in your own ability and don't be afraid to take a chance.
Person You Would Most Like To Meet: Robert De Niro.

BY JOHN ECONOMOS

STAR PROFILE

Gary Phillips



Date of Birth: June 9th, 1963
Birthplace: Bankstown, NSW
Previous Clubs: Coffs Harbour, Sydney Olympic, Brisbane Strikers
Current Club: Central Midfielder
Position: "Gazza"
Nickname: .Single
Marital Status: Employed by the QSF as Director of Schools Development
Occupation: Best Aspect Of Your Game: Distribution, work-rate and ball-winning
Most Difficult Opponent: Murray Barnes
Most Impressive Local Player: Frank Farina and Milan Ivanovic
Favourite Overseas Player: Kevin Keegan
Favourite Overseas Club: Liverpool
Euro 96 tip: France
What Qualities Make a Good Coach: Must have been a former player and must have real knowledge of the game
Honours: Australian Schoolboys, NSW, League Championship medal with Sydney Olympic (1990), plus two NSL Cup Final wins with Olympic
Ambitions For 1996: a Grand Final win with Brisbane Strikers
Ambitions After Retiring: To play as long as possible and be healthy and happy
Most Memorable Moment: The 1990 Grand Final win over Marconi plus the two NSL Cup finals, all with Sydney Olympic
Hobbies Outside Soccer: Surfing and Golf
Best Goal You've Seen Scored: Chris Kalantzis' 1986 Grand Final goal against St George
Favourite Food: Italian food
Favourite Drink: Chocolate Milkshakes
Car You Drive: Camry 1995
Favourite TV Show: Party of Five
TV Show You Refuse To Watch: Gladiators
Favourite Movie: Big Wednesday
Favourite Actor/Actress: Al Pacino and Demi Moore
Preferred Music: U2
Least Preferred Music: Heavy Metal
Favourite Comedian: Jerry Seinfeld
Pet Hates: Smokers
Special Advice To Young Players: You will always get what you give.
Person You Would Most Like To Meet: My wife and Demi Moore.

BY JOHN ECONOMOS

Letters to the Editor

Have your say on any soccer issue in



Short letters of about 400 words will be given preference in this column.

The opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily reflect those of this newspaper.

The Editor,
AUSTRALIAN & BRITISH SOCCER WEEKLY
 PO BOX 155,
 MARRICKVILLE
 NSW 2204
 Fax: (02) 550-9332

Great product get out and see

Dear Sir,

Lately a number of writers to your publication have found it necessary to use flawed statistics in an attempt to downgrade the game of Football in this country.

According to this mob of sorry individuals there is not a single bright spot in the game which is worthy of praise.

I will offer my own brand of layperson statistics for the knockers to peruse. Last weekend (20th of April) ten games of Rugby League averaged 9,000 spectators per game.

The Ericsson cup, six games !! averaged 4,800 per game. The total attendance so far this year is in excess of 800,000. Not bad for a sport which is perceived by most to be a minor sport compared to Rugby League. There is still one round and the

finals to come.

The media both written and electronic devoted 99.9% of their sports reports to promote Rugby League during the week ending the 20th of April. Yet Rugby League which received the bulk of the media attention could only outdraw Football by a miserable 4,000 spectators.

I believe that the Ericsson Cup can and will attract crowds of over 9,000 regularly, provided we are prepared to support our teams by attending live games. In fact, this will happen more quickly if the thousands of supporters who stay at home physically support the game by walking through the turnstiles.

The extra revenue will go a long way to finance the set up required to keep our local talent at home. At the same time the added

finance will assist to bring back our overseas based stars who have indicated that they will return provided they can earn a decent living at home as full time professionals.

We don't have a bad product and it will only get better, so let's stop the whining and get behind our sport in droves. Only then will the main stream media take notice and give the game the kind of support it deserves.

The grand final will be played soon and if you happen to be in the city which will host the game, buy a ticket.

Support the game and soon you will be happy you did because the profile of our sport will be so high, you will be proud to be associated with Football in this country.

Serge Armansin
 Marrickville, NSW.

Not one word on soccer

This letter was sent to Sydney Morning Herald Sports Section. Copies to the SMH and Soccer Australia CEO David Woolley.

Dear Deputy Sports Editor,

You recently sent me a reply to a letter in which I complained about the (lack of) coverage your sports section gives to the game of soccer.

Did you know Mr Meacham that the soccer season here is building up to a climax which interests tens of thousands of people throughout New South Wales?

Your Sydney Morning Herald issue of Saturday 27th April was published the day before the Ericsson League (that is the national soccer league) was about to go into its final round, with seven clubs fighting for six places in the play-offs.

This situation would even interest many thousands of your readers — if only they were informed about it. What was the response of your newspaper? NOTHING! NOT ONE WORD — in eleven pages of sports information!

Yet you devoted two whole pages to some swimming event which according to my information — all of 5,000 spectators actually attended. If you had bothered to look into it, you would have known that many times that number would be attending crucial soccer matches around Sydney the following day. The stage was set for a fascinating and dramatic event, building up to a climax which only a bigot or an idiot would deem irrelevant to the sporting lore of this country.

Your failure to answer my original question "is your sports section run by rabid anti-soccer types or just plain ignoramuses?", forces me into drawing my own conclusion. I believe the reason you continue to ignore Australia's most popular participating sport (which you even play

yourself), as well as one of the country's most-attended, is that you dismiss the domestic game as an ETHNIC game played by wogs. I believe that you do not consider it worthy of mention to your mainly Anglo Saxon/north-shore/eastern suburbs/ex-private school/rugby union-following readers.

This of course, is your privilege. If you want to remain in your time-warp where you continue to believe that Sydney sides will follow only good old 'traditional' Aussie sports like the three oval-ball codes, cricket, sailing and swimming, then so be it. But many far-sighted people believe that in this age of satellite and cable TV, the juggernaut that is the world game is about to hit Australia in a way which will change its sporting face forever.

Just look at the game kids are playing in parks around Sydney? How long do you think that people like yourselves can keep looking at the 'real' sporting world in your Nelson-fashion?

I am no bigot and would not deny that our game of soccer has many faults, the biggest of which is the almost clique-like control by certain ethnic groups.

This is the main reason as to why the participating numbers of the game are not reflected in the crowds on the terraces.

But, this is already beginning to change as more and more people of non 'traditional ethnic' background become actively involved. Such as for example the Chairman of soccer's governing body, a man bearing the good old Anglo Saxon name of David Hill — the very same one who worked for the Australian Broadcasting Corp.

Incidentally, for what little it's worth — I bought my last copy of the Sydney Morning Herald on Saturday 27th April 1996.

Henry Wizgier
 Forestville, NSW.

Soccer only a pastime in Australia

Dear Sir,

Lately, with great interest, I have been reading Mr Melor's comments about the true state of football in this country.

I agree with a lot of his comments and some things I have stated in my first letter last year. Football here is only a recreational pastime and basketball is popular because of its fashion statement. If we study ABSW figures on crowd attendances it is easily seen that where ever there are derbies involved with UTS Olympic that club has had its highest attendance. So it is simple. The crowds are up because UTS Olympic are doing well. When you look, however, at some of the other teams, 1500-2000 are the norm. "The crowds are up" as declared by "On the Ball", is in fact not a true reflection of the actual overall crowd attendances. Unfortunately David Hill and Co. are trying to

improve soccer in Australia from the top instead from the bottom up. This is where you want to practice as a doctor first and then do you studies!

Mr Melor is absolutely right when he says soccer is only recreational. Parents and kids don't follow soccer outside their own team and we have people coaching young kids without any knowledge of the game.

The NSL clubs have youth development officers. They do a great job in promoting their skills and teaching other youngsters.

But soccer needs the help of others. For instance the councils could help here.

In Holland even a fourth division amateur club has 2 to 3 grounds, like here, rented from the councils.

But their grounds are cosy. There is a club house with a bar and seats inside, pool table, table tennis and soccer game.

They serve coffee and beer etc. You can take your kids to training and be comfortable. You mix and talk about football.

Videos on TV of soccer etc. there the parents watch their kids on an old bench and it is cold. There, hot food is also available.

The kids there follow their first team, as well as say AJAX or PSV. This would improve the profile of soccer and also parents should be coming to meetings "educating" them on soccer, current playing methods and perhaps some history.

If we don't start from the bottom, the game will still be the same in 50 years. Let's face it, has it improved overall? In the fifties and sixties local games attracted over 10,000 people then. They also played skilful football.

It is all very well winning "Gold Cups" against Argentina and whoever and seeing that only one player of that foreign team is playing in the World Cup a year later! The only true yard stick is how well do we do in the world cup?

If we do qualify and even make it to the second round, I will then say "Yes, we have come a long way."

Gerry van Duuren
 UWS, Westmead

Editors note: This letter, appeared only in part last week.

CLEAN UP YOUR ACTS!

Dear Sir,

I was very disappointed to see that Danny Tiatto got himself sent off again.

Clearly it was a two-footed tackle and if he connected properly, Luke would have had a broken ankle or tibia. I can't understand why players of his calibre would commit foul tackles time and again.

He has terrific explosiveness in his style of play and an asset to any team, but not if he lets his teammates down by frequently getting sent off. Joe Spiteri is another player with terrific ability.

Why resort to inappropriate behaviour on the field when you

have such talent.

A man with Joe's reflexes could have easily avoided the Chilean's head, and why the constant barrage of abuse at linesmen and officials?

If there will be a benefit of doubt he won't get it as these linesmen are up to their necks with him.

And that is understandable, isn't it? When the Olyroos played Japan and Tiatto came on as sub the first thing he did was "clean up" a Japanese player!

Both these aforementioned players have terrific ability so why resort to these tactics?

Gerry van Duuren
 UWS Westmead

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Holland	11-2	Romania	16
Italy	6	Bulgaria	18
England	7	Denmark	20
Spain	8	Scotland	50
Croatia	10	Switzerland	50
France	10	Czech Republic	50
Portugal	12	Turkey	66

GROUP BETTING

GROUP 1

Holland	4-5	Spain	13-8
England	13-8	France	2-1
Scotland	9	Romania	7-2
Switzerland	9	Bulgaria	4-1

GROUP 3

Germany	5-4	Croatia	13-8
Italy	13-8	Portugal	13-8
Russia	7-2	Denmark	5-2
Czech Rep.	10	Turkey	9

GROUP 2

Spain	13-8
France	2-1
Romania	7-2
Bulgaria	4-1

GROUP 4

Croatia	13-8
Portugal	13-8
Denmark	5-2
Turkey	9

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Talia happy as Swindon move up A Vidmar in goal form

BY ROY HAY

Swindon Town keeper Frank Talia, born and raised in Queensland, was a delighted Australian as his team clinched the England Second Division title with a three-one away win over Chesterfield.

The only drawback for the 24 year old was that he had to watch the final game from the sidelines, after an ankle injury sustained when he went up for a cross in training.

The injury meant he had to surrender the hard-won goalkeeping spot to Fraser Digby, whom he replaced last month as Swindon made its promotion bid under former Liverpool star midfielder Steve McMahon.

Talia was in for treatment at the club when I spoke to him.

"We are delighted to go up after just one season. We hope to consolidate in the First Division next year. It was a pity to lose my place through injury after getting the chance and playing about a dozen games. I have been playing quite well. About average, not brilliant, and I have been keeping my head down and working hard. Fraser Digby has signed a contract for two

years. The manager has said he wants competition for places next season," said Talia.

"Steve McMahon is very happy we are going up as champions. He is looking forward very much to next season. I will be going home to Australia on holiday in two or three weeks time."

Talia has found it hard to win over the Swindon fans for whom Digby was a particular favourite, but the experience this season will have done him a great deal of good.

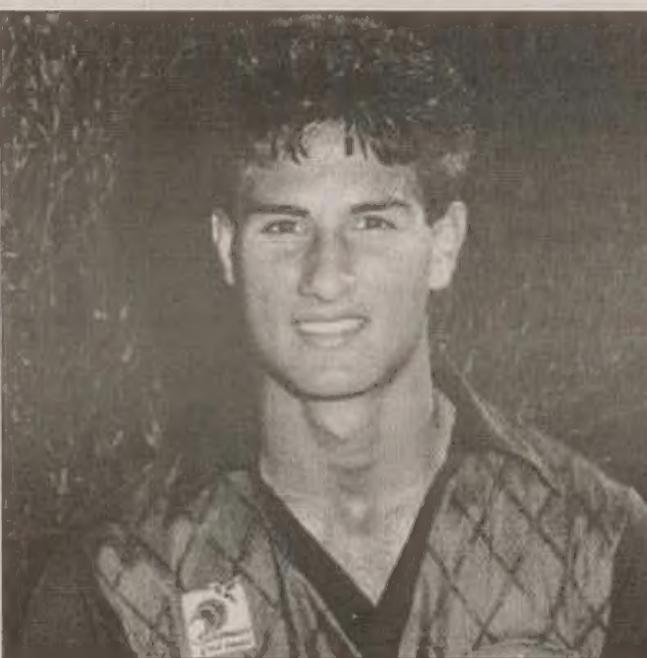
This will be the second time Talia has been part of a championship winning side in England, since he was at Blackburn Rovers in 1994-5 when they won the Premier League title. That season too he was badly affected by injury, missing many games.

He first went on loan to Swindon and transferred early this season. He has been disputing the custodian's position with Digby all season. Chris King, who organises the Swindon Town fanzine says, "Recently Talia has been the number one choice and although he has made the odd

error, possibly due to a low level of first-team experience, he has shown a great deal of promise".

In 1996/7 he should get his

chance to prove that he is worthy of a permanent place, though he knows that keepers tend to mature later than outfield players.



Frank Talia: Battling for recognition.

"Pay TV - The future of sport... and soccer"

"Pay TV — The Future of Sport ... and Soccer"

We laugh when we remember people who said computers were a passing phase, or sceptics who could not believe that mobile phones would ever be used. The reality is that cynics who say Pay TV will never catch on in Australia, will soon fall into the category of people who "got it wrong."

Pay TV is here to stay in Australia, and in the next decade will become a part of Australian culture. The power and influence of Pay TV can be appreciated when one considers the rugby league scenario most recently viewed in awe by the general sporting public.

But if you are still not certain of where it is all going in the future, just wander down the streets of England and see the number of satellite dishes attached to houses...or speak to the Italian Football Executives who will only deal with Pay TV stations...or the Asian advertising companies who are knocking on the door of sports TV companies that reach audiences in the billions!!

So it would seem that Pay TV is driven by the sport enthusiast...and some of the most fanatical sports followers are soccer fans. Irrespective if they are recent migrants or people whose ancestors were off the first fleet the soccer fan will do anything to watch not only their team, but any game that is on TV.

Soccer Australia and Optus Vision should be congratulated for their promotion and production of the Ericsson Cup and Australian Internationals through the Sports Australia Channel. Soccer fans this year have been able to watch live Ericsson Cup matches on Friday, Saturday and Sunday night.

The appearance of match highlights on all commercial stations would indicate that the coverage is a great success and finally our code is being recognised.

Also the plight of the Australian Soccer fan, especially the "average away" fan who cannot travel interstate to follow their team, has been remedied as they can tune in to the next best thing — "live — TV" Soccer coverage of their team!

The coverage of the Ericsson Cup is produced by the Sydney based TV production company, "zero-1-zero". The coverage is through, entertaining and driven by producer / director Harry Michaels who has not only blended all the best features from around the world but added a few highly innovative ideas. These innovations have included pre-match dressing room shots plus player and substitutes interviews as they go onto the pitch.

The Ericsson Cup coaches have also realised that the game and its promotion is evolving and they have been extremely supportive in their approach to these TV innovations — coaches Manfred Schaefer, Branco Culina, John Kosmina and Nick Theo all playing their part in unique interviews — a brave thing to do on live television...especially if the opposition scores when you are on!

Behind the scenes, Harry Michaels directs the game with a passion that often leaves him virtually falling out of the broadcast van after the game as if he actually played every move of the game.

His enthusiasm and expertise is seen in some of the best camera work and replays that can fan can wish for.

This enthusiasm is carried over in the team that presents on air this production — commentator Michael Cockerill, host Robert Wheatley and match analysts Berti Mariani and Steve Darby all share a love of the game but also between them many years of local and international football experience.

The team has an underlying philosophy to promote the game, avoid the politics and give the fans what they want to see...plenty of football action, interviews from behind the scenes and reality about the game they love.

From all indications Soccer Australia and Optus Vision have definitely come up with a winner and in the very near future when cabling allows, all soccer fans can have access to this great production...and their favourite team...every week — "Live...Home-and-Away"!!

Intensive injuries course

There will be a fairly intensive course on sports injuries run by the Parramatta Evening college. This is especially good for players, parents and people with an interest in sports injury management. It will run over eight weeks, two hours per night. The final night is on Tuesday July 23rd and from then on it

will run on Mondays. Some hours at first, will be covering the anatomy and physiology of the appropriate systems. Practical sessions are also included. For more information ring the college on (02) 687 2072. The course will be run by Gerry Van Duuren and only about 25 places are available.

Les Scheinflug Youth Cup

MARCONI IN FINAL

BY PETER KONSTO

Minor Premiers, Marconi Fairfield automatically qualified for the Les Scheinflug Youth Cup Grand Final after defeating the Australian Institute of Sport 1-0 at Marconi Stadium on Saturday night.

This game was always going to be a tight affair with the opening thirty minutes seeing both teams going through stages of dominance but neither being able to break the defence of the other.

The AIS must have known it was not going to be their day when on the 37th minute mark, a brilliant 30 metre free-kick by Vince Grella, beat the wall and the keeper but crashed wickedly against the cross-bar. With two of his team-mates following in on the simple rebound both fluffed the chance of getting in one another's way to send the ball sailing safety over the bar.

Marconi's winner came deep in first half injury time. Marconi's most potent striker, Nick Bolevski, created an opening and fired a low near post shot towards goal but AIS keeper, Barney Smith was equal to the task, saving with his feet.

However, from the ensuing corner, a goal mouth scramble resulted with the AIS unable to clear effectively. The ball fell for Marconi defender, Peter Krljan around the six yard box and he was able to stab the ball home after 49 minutes.

The second half saw Marconi dominate in terms of possession and field position, but the AIS did create the better

scoring opportunities. The AIS tried their luck from long range, particularly through Christian Care, but to no avail.

The AIS will now play UTS Olympic who easily brought to an end Sydney United's 1995/96 campaign with a crushing 4-1 victory at Leichhardt Oval on Sunday.

Two goals in each half did the job for Olympic with a brilliant Carlos Gonzalez chip from outside the box opening the scoring for the home team.

The two goal buffer was secured in time for the half-time break when Leon Alexiou beat two defenders and upon entering the box, slammed the ball past Tom Miletic in the United goal.

UTS began the second half as strongly as they finished the first and soon found themselves creating numerous opportunities with Ralph Bove missing two good chances in the opening ten minutes following the re-start.

It wasn't long before Olympic extended their lead to a third goal when substitute, Nick Rizzo found Alexiou with a wonderful defence splitting pass and he easily poked the ball home from close range after 58 minutes.

Olympic continued to dominate and it was another substitute in Paul Yates who made it four when he cleverly jinked his way into the box to fire past a hapless Miletic on 75 minutes.

United did manage a consolation goal when Jimmy Ascher was brought down in the area for a penalty and Dean Culina converted almost on full-time.

However, there was still enough time on the clock for Culina to earn a second yellow card and be subsequently sent off for a mistimed tackle and thus add to United's day of woe.

Adelaide City's Clash with Sydney United

BY JOHN ECONOMOS

Adelaide City tomorrow night (Wednesday) take on visiting Sydney United at the Hindmarsh Stadium in the Minor Semi final of the 'Top Six Series'.

The ultimate survivor of this Sudden Death battle has the arduous task of having to

back up on Sunday and face Minor Champions Marconi at the Parramatta Stadium at 3pm.

Adelaide's boss Johnny Perin, stated last night: "As you know we will be without our two Olympic squad players who left today (yesterday) for the U.S.A.

"Both midfielder Goran Lozanovski and our striker

Bradley Hassell are key players for us.

"They're both big losses but what can you do?

"I will bring into the squad Jamie Perin but haven't decided who will partner Damian (Mori) upfront, as yet.

"Speaking of Damian, he is due to break his 'goal-drought' of having now gone three games without scoring.

"Believe me he is getting frustrated himself after having bagged a flood of goals all season.

"Somehow I believe you could see a different Damian against Sydney United", ended Perin.

Also expected to be included in the 'Black and Whites' squad will be Adrian Iandorio and Kostas Salapasis.

Meanwhile Sydney United is plagued with absentee-problems as well.

United will be without three key players, also on Olympic duties for Australia.

Missing in action for United tonight will be their solid central marker Mark Babic, attacking left-midfielder Ante Moric plus playmaker Robbie Enes.

Compounding United's problems is the fact that Culina cannot call up his reserve power in the experienced pair of Richard Plesa and Mark Rudan.

Both Plesa and Rudan are out with injuries for the rest of the season.

Culina stated to ABSW: "Despite our set-backs, we are still confident of a good result

in Adelaide.

"I will bring into our travelling squad Chad Gibson, former Youth international Paul Bilokapic, plus Ante Seric and Jacob Burns", said Culina.

The lanky Bilokapic who has heaps of experience is back from serving a two match suspension.

Seric is a left midfielder from the AIS whilst Burns is

also another midfielder.

"Adelaide City are a great side with tons of experience at the back.

"They are a very hard team to break down as Sydney Olympic found out last Sunday night.

"With Mennillo, Foster and Costanzo in the middle of the pitch, they combine well", ended Culina.

VSF IN TURMOIL

BY PAUL MILLAR OF AAP

A power war that threatened to tear apart the troubled Victorian Soccer Federation is close to resolution, according to defiant chairman Henry Siwka.

The board of management of the federation passed an overwhelming vote of no-confidence in Siwka last Tuesday (May 7), following his decision to sack chief executive Terry Jones.

Siwka was putting on a brave face last week and said nothing had changed at Soccer House.

He said the board had passed a no-confidence vote in him, but there was no push to have him ousted from his position.

"It seems to be lost on many people that only the clubs can put me out of here, not the board," he told AAP.

Siwka is pushing through a restructuring program for the federation, which controls more than 40,000 players across Victoria.

It is clear that Jones is not part of the team, which Siwka wants to establish soccer as a power in the AFL stronghold. "Terry Jones is sacked by me and nothing



Henry Siwka

has changed to date," he said.

Siwka advertised Jones's position and appears to have further inflamed the situation by deciding on a replacement.

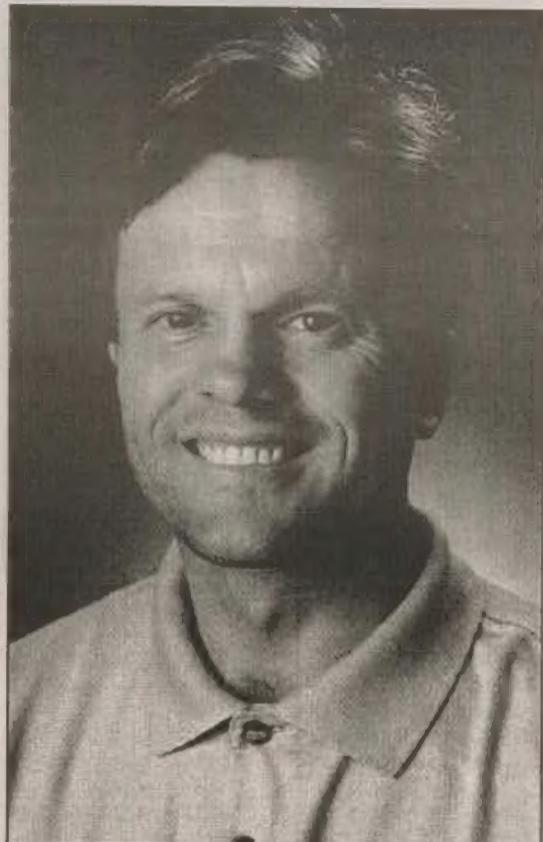
Siwka met several key board members last week and said there appeared to be a resolution to the conflict.

"After that meeting we are close to a compromise between the board and myself," he said.

It appears likely that the in-fighting will only be resolved with an extraordinary meeting of the clubs.



JOHNNY PERIN: Coach of the 'Black and Whites'.



BRANKO CULINA-Sydney United's boss.

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ERICSSON CUP
MATCH REPORTS

Adelaide City knock out Olympic

SYDNEY
OLYMPIC 0
ADELAIDE
CITY 1
BY JOHN ECONOMOS

DESPITE a sustained heavy opening barrage launched by a desperate and furious Sydney Olympic last Sunday night at Leichhardt Oval in the second leg of the Preliminary Semi final, a youthful Adelaide City not only absorbed the siege, but scored a courageous 1-0 win through a 72nd minute goal scored by young left midfielder Dino Mennillo.

The defiant 'Black and White' defence of Mark Yates, Alex Tobin, Milan Ivanovic and Bradley Armour, plus an early world class save by their elastic goalkeeper Jason Petkovic, enabled Adelaide City to climb into tomorrow night's (Wednesday) Minor Semi final against Sydney United at the Hindmarsh Stadium.

Olympic came forward in wave after wave with raids from strikers Derek Poimer, Kimon Taliadoros and Alistair Edwards plus cum-midfielder Kris Trajanovski, backed up with slashing runs from very deep by left-defender Nick Meredith.

The South Australians leaned back and inspired by World Cup defending duo Alex Tobin and Milan Ivanovic, methodically absorbed Sydney's hostile

attacks, yet simultaneously fearing the ever-threatening possibility Olympic would

SCORER: Adelaide City: Mennillo (70)
YELLOW CARDS: Olympic: Cianter (45), Adelaide: Mennillo 15
REFEREE: E Brazzale
CROWD: Approx. 9000

finally crack their lines. But it was left to young Mennillo to hit the winner in the 72nd minute, following a break wide out by striker Bradley Hassell to fellow striker Damian Mori.

In possession and on the edge of Olympic's box, in a flash Mori back-heeled to Mennillo on his left who agonisingly steadied himself in the face of a raging cover-defence to blast on target.

A fully stretched Olympic goalkeeper Mike Gibson managed to parry the initial missile, but Mennillo quickly followed up to slam the rebound, bulge the net, and knock Olympic out of the Top Six Series.

As early as in the third minute however, it all could have been ever so different if it had not been for Adelaide's heroic gloveman, Petkovic.

A rocketing free kick struck by Olympic's Nick Meredith from the left, ricochetted off a leaping central marker Scott Baillie's knee inside the six yard box, as Petkovic recoiled with a magnificent one glove to lift the flashing point-blank missile over his



Alex Tobin: City's victorious skipper and centre-back.

cross-bar and keep a clean sheet.

Sydney Olympic's coach David Ratcliffe desperately changed from his standard 5-2-3 line up to a more balanced and ambitious 4-3-3 formation in his urgent and valiant endeavour to cancel out a two goal deficit hurdle from the first leg played at Hindmarsh Stadium last Sunday week.

Olympic embarked on a savage, relentless crusade, bombarding the 'Black and Whites' to force no less than five corners in the opening six minutes.

Throwing caution to the wind and so many men forward and with monotonous regularity, it appeared that Olympic was always going to be vulnerable at the back to get caught out with a quick counter-break.

Adelaide City having survived the initial early onslaught, stung back in the 26th minute. Central midfielder Craig Foster released international striker Bradley Hassell as the blond marksman screamed forward to blast on target, but the Olympic Games striker was

denied all joy by a brilliant block from goalkeeper Mike Gibson.

Three minutes later young Mennillo shook off Olympic's midfielder Walter Ardene to cross into centre box. But the Ericsson League's ace goalscorer Damian Mori headed the cross just over Gibson's crossbar.

With so much power and pace expended in attack in the first session, Olympic slowly became drained and frustrated as the second half minutes gradually rolled on. This allowed Adelaide's midfield quartet of Angelo Costanzo, Craig Foster, Mark Brazzale and Dino Mennillo to gradually gather control and start to dictate the course of the match.

The South Australian coach Johnny Perin was calmly humble in his summarisation of the clash stating: "We had to be very careful of Olympic as they are always dangerous, but they ended up playing as we expected they would and we caught them on the break which could have yielded us two more goals in the first session to bury them.

"You just can't beat these teams down through the middle. I was happy with all my young guys who took their lead from our experienced international duo at the back (Alex Tobin and Milan Ivanovic)", concluded the former

Australian World Cup midfielder.

SYDNEY OLYMPIC: Gibson, Barrett, Ciantar, Baillie, Meredith (Tome 37), Ardene, Trajanovski, Tsekenis, Taliadoros, Poimer (Ironside 61), Edwards (Augerinos 74).

ADELAIDE CITY: Petkovic, Yates, Tobin, Ivanovic, Armour, Costanzo, Foster, Mennillo (Iandorio 87), Brazzale (Perin 74), Mori, Hassell (Salapasidis 75).



Scott Baillie: Sydney Olympic's central marker.



Frank Farina: Was controversially sent off.

Brisbane struck out

BRISBANE
STRIKERS 1
SYDNEY
UNITED 2
(1-4 agg)

Brisbane Strikers Ericsson Cup season came to an abrupt end with the controversial sending off of skipper Frank Farina in a bitter knock out semi-final against Sydney United at Suncorp Stadium last Saturday.

The Strikers, who needed to win by two goals to force the match into injury time and a sudden death playoff, played the entire second half a man down before bowing out 2-1 losers.

In a sensational first half, the Strikers played like men possessed in front of a crowd of nearly 9,000 and went to the break leading 1-0 after a piece of Farina magic.

Farina found space inside Sydney defender Velimir Kupresak and turned sharply, rifling a left foot shot past United keeper John

Perosh in injury time. However, Farina's moment of glory was short lived when he was given his

SCORERS: Brisbane: Farina (44)
Sydney United: Lamond (83), Moric (87)
YELLOW CARDS: Brisbane: Farina (21), Gwynne (21), Jackson (71)
Sydney United: Moric (73)
RED CARD: Brisbane: Farina (45)
CROWD: 8727
REFEREE: B Hugo

marching orders by Sydney referee Brett Hugo soon after the goal.

Hugo, who played an astonishing nine minutes of injury time in the first half, showed Farina his second red card of the season after a tackle on United midfielder Ante Moric.

Television replays showed Farina's indiscretion was line-ball and the crowd agreed — Hugo was showered by a cup of water

and needed a police escort as he left the field.

While the Strikers' title hopes all but vanished with the dismissal, the home side dug deep into their reserves for the final 45 minutes and were unlucky not to bag the much needed second goal which would have given them a sudden-death injury-time playoff.

Socceroo Jason Polak missed a glorious opportunity for the Strikers midway through the second half, directing his header over the crossbar after receiving an Allan Hunter flick-on in the box.

The Strikers threw everything into attack for most of the second half, putting Sydney United on the back foot with the unseemly sight of all bar one Striker camped in United's penalty area at several stages.

As Brisbane desperately searched for the second goal, the visitors grabbed the equaliser six minutes from time when Striker Manis Lamond found the back of the net after a United shot hit the upright and rebounded

into his path.

The goal took the sting out of the Strikers' attack and eventually the home side succumbed to a second goal moments before the final whistle when midfielder Ante Moric scored directly from a free kick.

After the match Farina was highly critical of his dismissal and blamed too many referees in Australia playing to the "letter of the law."

"The first offence was silly on my part but part of football is communication with referees.

"Being the captain I think that's being only fair to be able to speak with them."

"In my time since I went overseas Australia has lost some good referees in Don Campbell and Chris Banbridge who used to control the final series and you could always chat with them."

"But it seems to be different with the younger referees these days."

Coach Bruce Stowell was obviously disappointed: "I don't

intend making any comment but we'll be making a report," he said. "It was really something which marred the game."

BRISBANE: Bolton, Williams, Hunter, Jackson, Phillips, Farina, Polak, Brown, Wright (Battistin HT), T Cranney, Gwynne (Hews 83)

SYDNEY UNITED: Perosh, Trajkovski, Kupresak, Popovic, M Babic, Enes (C Gibson 81), Moric, Markovac, Milicic (Z Babic 70), Zdrilic, Lamond.



Manis Lamond: Equalised for Sydney.

ERICSSON CUP

MATCH REPORTS

Marconi struggle back against the Knights

MARCONI
FAIRFIELD 2
MELBOURNE
KNIGHTS 2
(2-4 agg)

BY JOHN ECONOMOS

CURRENT League Champions the Melbourne Knights, arrogantly rode into the Marconi Stadium last Saturday night, defiant that they would not sit back and just defend their first leg 2-0 win over Marconi from last week. In fact within 35 minutes of sustained attacks, the Knights cheekily lifted themselves to a 0-2 lead and had Marconi almost dead and buried before the home side struggled back with two second half goals in the space of 12 minutes to pull off a face-saving 2-2 draw.

Man Of The Match, the Knights' dynamic 20 year old right midfielder, Tommy Pendeljak, opened the score in the 22nd minute with a spectacular goal.

From the halfway mark right defender Vinko Buljubasic pumped forward a ball to Joe Spiteri on the left who clipped it

across to the explosive Pendeljak to blast first time into the target.

In the 35th minute the Cervinski brothers combined to double the scoreline when striker Adrian drifted his free kick across the box for his centre-back brother David to crack a powerful header into the target.

However as early in the 9th minute, Marconi should have ironically drawn first blood following a long through-ball by playmaker Vlado Zoric to striker Francis Awaritefe on the left. Awaritefe promptly relayed it on to Brad Maloney inside the box, but the Knights' alert Olympic Games goalkeeper Frank Juric cut off the danger.

Marconi's coach Manfred Schaefer shocked supporters when he most surprisingly left out his dangerous mobile midfielder Matthew Bingley to make room for Zoric.

But after the break Schaefer rectified this ploy by bringing on the blond attacker and slotted him upfront to partner tenacious striker Andy Harper.

But the damage had been done in the first session by the victorious Victorians who despite the draw booked themselves straight into Sunday week's Grand

Final at Olympic Park.

Five minutes after the break Marconi's long-range midfield shooter, Eric Hristodoulou pulled

scorching pace.

In contrast Marconi's midfield of Maloney, Hristodoulou and Zoric repeatedly looked brittle against the power and pace of the current League champions.

Melbourne Knight's quietly pleased coach Ian Dobson later stated "I'll be looking to organise a game or two before the grand final as we must get some matches from somewhere. There will be no question that Andrew Marth will be back from suspension and in the team for the grand final.

"I came here tonight prepared not to just defend and that was our entire pre match plan and even though Marconi greatly improved in the second half we are most happy to be in the grand final.

"We will work hard during the next week and I don't care who we meet but at the moment it looks possible it could be Sydney United, but even Adelaide City looked good the last few weeks and we have not discounted them either. I've played in three grand finals with Preston and have lost them all" ended the disciplined Dobson.

Meanwhile in the Marconi dressing room coach Manfred Schaefer sternly reflected "The first goal was against the run of

play and as soon as they scored we were depleted a bit. Their second goal should have been picked up but it was good to come back and take it another step further. Now we have to do it the hard way."

When Schaefer was questioned about his shock decision to drop mobile midfielder Matthew Bingley he quickly answered, "I dropped Bingley to make room for Zoric. There was no other way. I now have no fear of the Melbourne Knights as we proved we can score against them.

"I took off Francis (Awaritefe)

because he was arguing too much and I could not risk having him suspended as he already had been booked", ended Schaefer.

MARCONI: Catlin, Van Egmond (Holst 46), Souris, Stanton, Casserly, Maloney, Zoric, Hristodoulou, Renaud (Angelucci 73), Awaritefe, Harper.

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS: Juric, Buljubasic (Vojtek 58), D. Cervinski, Simunic, De Amicis, Pendeljak, Lapsansky, Z. Markovski, Kovacevic (Nastevski 75), Spiteri, A. Cervinski (O. Pendeljak 68).



David Cervinski: Scored for Melbourne Knights.



Paul Bilokapic: Sydney United.



Milan Ivanovic: Adelaide City.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

BY RICHARD KREIDER



Peter Murphy: Open the scoring.

SORRENTO STRETCH STIRLING

Sorrento were inflicted with a fourth consecutive defeat last Saturday, when they went down by a late goal from Stirling Macedonia at their Percy Doyle Reserve.

It was a plucky effort by the Gulls, especially from guest midfield maestro Anthony Carbone who was playing his final game before joining the Olyroos. But, together with a gritty performance from Andy Chapman, Dave Lee and Tyron Harrison, it was still not enough to prevent a determined Lions side from collecting their fourth victory of the season.

The opening half was equally divided in terms of dominance, although it was the visitors who always looked the more dangerous around a goal.

Peter Murphy started the afternoons goal action after nine minutes when he hammered an Abdul Kamara centre just over

the top, then at the other end Neil Blunt headed the ball into the net but was flagged for offside.

With Stirling already

playing without injured winger Paul Lincoln, the Lions found themselves minus another key flank runner in the 25th minute when Dean Nicolaou staggered off after an accidental kick to the head. He was replaced by Scott Devine. Alex Cummings, who had an inspirational game in the Stirling defence, curled the ball into Sorrento's goal direct from a 29th minute free-kick, only to see a team member in an off-side position. Sorrento started the second-half the more positive of the two adversaries with David Lee and Andy Chapman both coming close to breaking the deadlock.

But the visitors steadied immediately after those early scares and went in search for a breakthrough of their own. After an hours play, Lions frontman Robbie Milevski did well to put a shot in on Willie

Goalscorer sensation Robbie Perruzza has shown once again that he should not be overlooked for the Perth Glory squad that will be taking on Italian giants Sampdoria on May 31, by netting yet another two over the FA Cup weekend. This time, the victims were Swan IC who went down 2-0 at their Italian Club Ground. The clean-sheet victory has also maintained Bayswater's astonishing record of not conceding a goal after five rounds.

Although not entirely a classic, both sides showed plenty of endeavour all day. After Robbie Scarparolo kept Bayswater in the match with two quality saves, he

PERRUZZA UNSTOPPABLE FOR PANTHERS

After Perruzza had a 70th minute headed 'goal' turned down over a questionable offside decision, he only took a minute to legitimately find the net when he ran onto another Boza Erakovic ball, drew the keeper Luka Nicora off his line and neatly flicked it into an open net.

It was 2-0 three minutes

later when Perruzza was

first to a low Jason Van

Rooy centre and found the

mark from 12 metres

through a maze of legs, to

place him on eleven goals.

FALCONS
TRIUMPH OVER
PERTH

Two second half strikes

provided

Inglewood

Falcons with victory over the previously unbeaten Perth at the Kiev Sports Ground. In a fast encounter where both goalkeepers were kept busy, Inglewood went ahead in the 62nd minute through left-winger James Taylor with a simple tap-in.

After Perruzza had a 70th minute headed 'goal' turned down over a questionable offside decision, he only took a minute to legitimately find the net when he ran onto another Boza Erakovic ball, drew the keeper Luka Nicora off his line and neatly flicked it into an open net.

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Rooy centre and found the

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through a maze of legs, to

place him on eleven goals.

The score might have been more emphatic had Morgan and Sutton been more accurate instead of hitting the cross-bar in the 21st and 68th minutes respectively. Ray Marinovic, in his first full game for Perth, came closest to scoring for his side after an hours play, when he struck an upright.

Meanwhile, Eugen Singorzan netted a hat-



Alex Cummings: "Inspirational game" for Stirling.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Swan IC	0	Bayswater City Panthers	2
Sorrento	0	Stirling Macedonia	1
Western Knights	3	Olympic Kingsway	3
Sp'wood Dalmatinac	3	Floreat Athena	2
Inglewood Falcons	2	Perth S.C.	0

PREMIER LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Bayswater	5	5	0	0	13	0	15
Stirling	5	4	1	0	9	5	13
Inglewood	5	3	2	0	11	6	11
Perth S.C.	5	3	0	1	9	4	9
Spearwood	5	3	0	2	10	9	9
Sorrento	5	1	0	4	3	6	3
Knights	5	0	2	3	7	11	2
Floreat	5	0	2	3	7	13	2
Kingsway	5	0	2	3	8	15	2
Swan	5	0	1	4	4	12	1

RESERVES

Swan IC	1	Bayswater City Panthers	2
Sorrento	0	Stirling Macedonia	2
Western Knights	0	Olympic Kingsway	6
Sp'wood Dalmatinac	5	Floreat Athena	0
Inglewood Falcons	3	Perth S.C.	2

UNDER 18S

Swan IC	4	Bayswater City Panthers	0
Sorrento	5	Stirling Macedonia	2
Western Knights	1	Olympic Kingsway	0
Sp'wood Dalmatinac	3	Floreat Athena	2
Inglewood Falcons	0	Perth S.C.	6

FIRST DIVISION

B Caledonian	0	Southside United	2
Joondalup City	3	Morley Windmills	2
Dianella WE	2	Perth City	0
Balcatta	2	Ashfield Bunsbury	3
Cockburn United	0	North Lake Espanol	3
Rockingham City	1	Fremantle City	3

SECOND DIVISION

Armadale Park	0	Wanneroo City	0
Stirling Vardar	1	Quens Park	3
Melville Corinthian	0	Balga	2
Western Yugal	1	University	1

trick for Western Knights

who drew 3-3 with fellow first division newcomers

Olympic Kingsway, Frank

Paolino, James Mander

and John Foley scored the

Kingsway goals who leap-

frog ahead of Swan at the

foot of the ladder. At

Dalmatinac Park, Spearwood

Dalmatinac

collected a valuable 3-2

victory over Floreat

Athena.

Two goals to Michael

Mirco and a single from

new signing Scott Miller

sunk a luckless Floreat

side who could only

reply through a double

from tall stopper Craig

Deans.

Favourites Mexico off to a flying start in CONCACAF'S Olympic qualifying tournament

COSTA RICA 4 TRINIDAD & TOBAGO 2

Mexico and Costa Rica have joined Canada as the early front-runners for the one guaranteed berth CONCACAF will get in the Atlanta tournament.

Ronald Gomez scored three goals to power Costa Rica to a 4-2 victory over Trinidad and Tobago.

The winner of the six-nation tournament automatically qualifies for the 16-team Olympic field. The runner-up plays a two-game series with Australia to qualify for the Atlanta Games.

rather than expose them to El Salvador's physical defence.

Blanco, Manuel Soi and Agustin Garcia did not see action until the second half.

"I wouldn't have played team at all if we were leading," said De Los Cobos, who accused the Salvadoreans of playing dirty.

"We're the most talented team in CONCACAF and the weaker teams always compensate for that by playing rough," said De Los Cobos.

"It's tradition, these two teams don't like each other."

Once the big trio came in, the Mexicans began to pull away.

Blanco made it 1-0 in the 46th minute, redirecting a

corner kick past goalkeeper Santos Rivera. He then made it 2-0 in the 75th minute with a blast from 35 feet out. Manuel Abundis scored one minute later.

"They could play half the game without three of their best players," said Tarabini, El Salvador's coach..

"Unfortunately, I don't have that luxury."

CANADA 3 JAMAICA 0

Canada cruised to a 3-0 win against Jamaica.

They led 2-0 in the first half with goals from defender Jason de Vos and striker Martin Nash.

The Canadians stormed out and had the Jamaicans pinned in their end for most

of the first half.

De Vos opened the scoring with a low shot from close range following a corner.

In the 41st minute Nash finished off a brilliant individual effort when he sent a low drive into the net.

Niall Thompson made it 3-0 in the 80th minute when he slammed in a low shot.

The Jamaicans played without one of their best players, Onandi Lowe, who received two yellow cards in the final game of the earlier rounds.

CONCACAF PLAY-OFFS. (The runner-up to play Australia Olympic for the 16th place in Atlanta 96)



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QUEENSLAND XXXX League



Lions win 'Derby'

BY GLENN DAVIS

Brisbane Lions ended their rivals Brisbane City's unbeaten run in the XXXX league local derby clash with a 1-0 win at Richlands Stadium on Sunday.

The former national league club giants who have developed a fierce rivalry over the years were separated only by a Frank Mengotti strike thirty minutes after City goalkeeper Danny Duke parried a thunderbolt shot from Lion's Anthony Brown.

Lions, who had turned around an early season slump by scoring nineteen goals in their last five matches and conceding none, have narrowed the gap with the leaders to eight points at the half way mark of the season.

Although it was their first defeat, Brisbane City were unlucky not to score on several occasions and could easily have snatched a draw and even maintained their perfect strike rate.

Apart from the goal,

honours were evenly shared in the first half after both sides failed to capitalise on two scoring chances each.

Brown missed a sixth minute chance to put his side ahead blasting a shot straight into the hands of Duke after Mengotti broke clear from the half way line after capitalising on a poor pass from giant City defender Mark Greer.

A similar misdirected pass from Lion's defender David Lonsdale on the edge of his own box fell to City midfielder Damien Waugh whose shot was wide of the mark when a well placed chip could have got the desired result.

City midfielder Shane Haddow missed a late chance just before the break when he headed down to Lion's keeper Rob Farrow's feet after arriving perfectly to meet a Waugh cross.

Farrow again proved the stumbling block for the visitors eight minutes after the break when the former Qld keeper kept his score sheet blank with a brilliant one handed save to his left off a Lee Scriggins shot.

However, three minutes later Farrow's opposite showed he was equally as agile when he plucked out a superb diving save to once again deny Brown from increasing the home sides lead.

City's hunger for the equaliser was getting desperate throughout the second half but Lion's stout defence held on.

City had two further chances to equalise, first through lanky midfielder Nick Seely on sixty minutes when a Waugh cross from the left sailed into a congested goal mouth.

Seely attempted to pierce the crowded box but his attempt was smothered by Farrow while Haddow almost stole the equaliser with fifteen minutes to go when he received a ball side on to the goal and managed to curl a deceiving shot just wide of the upright.

In other matches, Trianga Rovers trailed 1-0 at half time before hammering three late goals to down Beenleigh 4-1 courtesy of a double from

LEADING GOALSCORERS	
9	Keiran Cooper (Rochedale)
8	Mark Flemington (Taringa)
7	Clayton Koch (Pine Rivers)
6	Cameron Watson (Nerang)
6	Anthony Brown (Brisbane Lions)
5	Craig Collins (Rochedale)
5	Fraser Cuba (Taringa)
4	Andy Lees (Rochedale)
4	Geoff Maltby (Wynnum)
4	Frank Mengotti (Brisbane Lions)
4	Lee Scriggins (Brisbane City)
4	Damian Waugh (Brisbane City)
4	Paul Wilkins (Wynnum)
4	Dene Almond (Pine Rivers)
4	Willy Carter (Eastern Suburbs)
4	Paul Cockbain (Nerang)
4	Warren Cooley (Brisbane City)
4	Greg De Losa (Grange Thistle)
4	Danny Docherty (Grange Thistle)
4	Steve Fitzsimons (Nerang)
4	Troy Hews (Coalstars)
4	Ian Hutchison (Brisbane City)
4	Troy Percival (Grange Thistle)

striker Fraser Cuba, comfortable 5-1 winners over Easts. Rochedale Rovers had a similar decisive win thumping Grange Thistle 5-0 while Pine Rivers beat Wynnum 2-1.

QUEENSLAND XXXX LEAGUE

Grange Thistle	0	Rochedale	5
Eastern Suburbs	0	Nerang	5
North Star	0	Coalstars	1
Taringa Rovers	4	Beenleigh	1
Brisbane Lions	1	Brisbane City	0
Wynnum	1	Pine Rivers	2

TABLE

Brisbane City	11	10	0	1	25	5	30
Brisbane Lions	11	7	1	3	23	14	22
Rochedale Rovers	10	6	2	2	34	9	20
Beenleigh	11	6	1	4	13	14	19
Wynnum District	11	5	3	3	20	15	18
Grange Thistle	11	5	2	4	17	25	17
Taringa Rovers	11	4	3	4	21	17	15
Nerang SC	11	5	0	6	23	22	15
Coalstars	11	4	1	6	18	20	13
Pine Rivers Utd	11	3	0	8	20	31	9
Eastern Suburbs	10	2	2	6	12	22	8
North Star	11	0	1	10	9	41	1

ROUND 11

North Star	0	Coalstars	1
Taringa Rovers	4	Beenleigh	1
Brisbane Lions	1	Brisbane City	0
Grange Thistle	0	Rochedale Rovers	5
Eastern Suburbs	0	Nerang SC	5
Wynnum District	1	Pine Rivers Utd	2

DIVISION TWO

Rocklea United	11	8	2	1	37	14	26
Olympic United	11	7	3	1	33	18	24
St Albans	11	5	3	3	27	19	18
Mount Gravatt	11	5	2	4	23	21	17
Albany Creek	11	5	1	5	25	30	16
Inala City United	11	5	0	6	21	27	15
Acacia Ridge	10	4	1	5	20	18	13
The Gap	11	4	1	6	15	23	13
Ipswich St Helens	11	4	0	7	12	26	12
Logan City Kings	10	3	1	6	18	18	10
Capalaba	10	2	4	4	18	23	10
Willowburn	10	2	2	6	11	23	8

ROUND 12

The Gap	1	Willowburn	0
Rocklea United	2	Mount Gravatt	4
Ipswich St Helens	3	Olympic United	2
Logan City Kings	p	Capalaba	p
Inala City United	2	Acacia Ridge	1
St Albans	2	Albany Creek	1

DIVISION THREE

Slacks Creek	10	10	0	0	45	3	30
Newmarket	10	8	1	1	21	7	25
Mitchelton	10	6	1	3	30	17	19
Souths United	10	5	2	3	28	11	17
Uni of Qld	10	5	2	3	15	11	17
Goodna & Dist.	10	4	2	4	17	12	14
Redlands United	10	4	1	5	22	19	13
Annerley Recreation	10	3	2	5	16	21	11
Latrobe Athletic	10	3	2	5	21	28	11
Darra United	10	2	3	5	19	27	9
Western Suburbs	10	2	0	8	11	56	0
Clairvaux SC	10	0	0	10	12	45	0

ROUND 11

Souths United	12	Western Suburbs	0
Mitchelton	4	Annerley Recreation	2
Newmarket	2	Goodna & Districts	1
Darra United	4	Latrobe Athletic	2
Slacks Creek	6	Clairvaux SC	0
Uni of Queensland	0	Redlands United	1

DIVISION FOUR

South Star	9	8	0	1	20	6	24
Moggill United	10	7	1	2	25	6	22
Bayside United	10	6	1	3	25	13	19
Southside Eagles	9	5	3	1	18	12	18
Samford							

SUPER LEAGUE
FIRST GRADE

Blacktown City	1	Rockdale City Suns	1
Central Coast	1	Warringah Dolphins	1
St George Saints	5	Adamstown R'bud	1
Illawarra Lions	3	Bonnyrigg WE	6
Canterbury Berries	2	Bankstown City Lions	3
Parramatta City	0	Leichhardt Tigers	0
Parramatta Eagles	0	Leichhardt Tigers	0
Macarthur Rams	0	Sutherland Sharks	1

UNDER 21

Blacktown City	1	Rockdale City Suns	0
Central Coast	1	Warringah Dolphins	2
St George Saints	7	Adamstown R'bud	0
Illawarra Lions	1	Bonnyrigg WE	6
Canterbury Berries	3	Bankstown City Lions	3
Parramatta City	3	Leichhardt Tigers	0
Parramatta Eagles	3	Leichhardt Tigers	0
Macarthur Rams	1	Sutherland Sharks	0

SUPER LEAGUE — PHASE 2

FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
St George Saints	1	1	0	0	5	1	3
Bonnyrigg W/Eagle	1	1	0	0	6	3	3
Bankstown City	1	1	0	0	3	2	3
Sutherland Sharks	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Blacktown City	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Central Coast	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Rockdale City Sun	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Warringah Dolphin	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Parramatta Eagles	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Leichhardt Tigers	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Canterbury Berries	1	0	0	1	2	3	0
Macarthur Rams	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Illawarra Lions	1	0	0	1	3	6	0
Adamstown R'bud	1	0	0	1	1	5	0

FEDERATION DIVISION ONE
FIRST GRADE

Bathurst '75	1	Penrith Panthers	2
Fairfield Bulls	1	Hills United	7
Sydney Cosmos	2	Stanmore Hawks	2
Mt Druitt Town Rangers	3	Auburn United	3
Dulwich Hill	0	Ryde City	1
Belmore Hercules	6	Mt Pritchard	0
West Wanderers	1	Sthn Minotaurs	1
UNDER 21			
Bathurst '75	2	Penrith Panthers	3
Fairfield Bulls	3	Hills United	0
Sydney Cosmos	4	Stanmore Hawks	1
Mt Druitt Town Rangers	4	Auburn United	1
Dulwich Hill	1	Ryde City	5
Belmore Hercules	3	Mt Pritchard	6
West Wanderers	4	Sthn Minotaurs	1
UNDER 18			
Bathurst '75	2	Penrith Panthers	0
Fairfield Bulls	0	Hills United	1
Sydney Cosmos	9	Stanmore Hawks	1
Mt Druitt Town Rangers	1	Auburn United	2
Dulwich Hill	0	Ryde City	4
Belmore Hercules	2	Mt Pritchard	1
West Wanderers	7	Sthn Minotaurs	0

FEDERATION DIVISION ONE
FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Sydney Cosmos	9	5	3	1	22	8	18
Penrith Panthers	9	5	3	1	19	11	18
Hills United	9	6	0	3	21	14	18
Bathurst '75	9	5	2	2	15	9	17
Belmore Hercules	9	4	3	2	23	11	15
Ryde City	9	4	3	2	16	12	15
Auburn United	9	3	4	2	22	21	13
Mt Druitt Town	9	3	2	4	16	26	11
Dulwich Hill	9	2	3	4	8	10	9
Sthn Minotaurs	9	2	3	4	10	15	9
Mt Pritchard	9	2	3	4	13	19	9
West Wanderers	9	2	3	4	10	19	9
Fairfield Bulls	9	2	1	6	13	20	7
Stanmore Hawks	9	0	3	6	10	23	3

FEDERATION DIVISION TWO
FIRST GRADE

Hurstville	2	Liverpool City	2
Trasandinos	3	Uni of NSW	1
Prairiewood Utd	0	Greystanes	3
Parramatta City	4	Granville Greenisland	2
Alexandria Warr	2	Concord Jnrs	3
Sydney District	1	AC United	0

Leichhardt Tigers crack sponsorship

BY JOHN ECONOMOS

NSW Super League team Leichhardt Tigers announced a major sponsorship deal this week from Western Suburbs Leagues Club.

The Tigers' president Tony Raciti stated to ABSW last night: "This valuable sponsorship has further strengthened the financial viability of Leichhardt Tigers Soccer Club.

"Together with our other high profile corporate sponsors such as Alitalia and Optus Vision, the Western Suburbs Leagues Club is without doubt the highest profile sporting club in the inner city", stated Mr Raciti.

With the Western Suburbs Rugby League team relocating from Lidcombe Oval to the outer western Sydney suburb of Campbelltown, the Ashfield based Social club wished to continue supporting a local sporting organisation.

Serious financial support has now been thrown in the Tigers' direction.

It is understood that the Wests sponsorship deal is a five figure cash allocation.

The Tigers have now been further encouraged in their endeavours to recreate the historical success they once enjoyed under the old banner of the Apia Soccer Club, one of Australia's biggest and

proudest clubs of the 60s, 70s and 80s..

Mr Raciti went on to add: "The Leichhardt Tigers will now operate and use the premises of the Western Suburbs Leagues Club as our official base.

"All Board meetings, after-match functions and all socialising connected with our Soccer teams, will be conducted at Wests Leagues", ended Mr Raciti.

Meanwhile Wests Leagues General manager Mr John Edwards said that his Board had committed to sponsor and support the Leichhardt Tigers for the remainder of the current season.

NSW Soccer Super League

Blacktown City Demons deservedly picked up a point against Rockdale Suns last Saturday night, despite playing nearly two-thirds of the match with only 10 men.

Damon Langan was sent off for the second time this season after fouling the talented Rockdale Suns' player Ivo de Jesus towards the end of the first half. This followed the earlier replacement of David Scott due to injury and meant their pre match tactical plan had to be re written. Fortunately for the spectators the Demons continued to attack whenever possible and take the game to Rockdale.

Their determination paid off minutes before half-time when Keith Warren in the Rockdale goal could not hold Pat Bradley's well struck in-swinging corner and the Demons went one goal up.

The second half was quite even, although Jason Connolly should have put Blacktown further ahead three minutes after the restart when he only had Warren to beat in goal, following excellent lead up work from Steve Berry.

A period of sustained pressure by Rockdale followed, and eventually produced the equaliser in the sixty-fifth minute.

Great work by Ivo de Jesus down the right wing capped by an excellent cross, allowed Eric Williams to score his eighth goal in eight consecutive matches, heading the ball wide of John Crawley in the Demons' goal.

Five minutes later Crawley made a tremendous save from a point blank shot by Rockdale's Spase Najovski.

The Rockdale coach, Rale Rasic, was very pleased with the standard of the game which extended his team's unbeaten run to six matches.

New City coach, Bob Daley, was equally pleased with his team's performance and in particular Jeff Doyle and Steve Berry.

Blacktown snared all three points in reserve grade thanks to a last minute penalty save by their keeper, Dragon Pupovac, having taken the lead early in the game with a well taken goal by Jay Anderson.

Next Saturday the Demons travel to Seymour Shaw Park to take on Sutherland Sharks, still unbeaten after 14 rounds of competition this season. Reserve grade kicks off at 4.00 pm followed by first grade at 6.00pm.

MT DRUITT TOWN RANGERS

BY BOB BROOKS

Mt Druitt Town Rangers which plays in NSW Federation Division 1, are parting company with their coach, Wayne Farnsworth.

Farnsworth is moving to Cootamundra in Southern NSW so he and the Club have parted on excellent terms.

As a Club spokesman said, "Farnie could have the job for the next three years, if he wasn't moving four and a half hours drive away."

Mickey Cross will be taking the reins at Poppendetta Park. Cross was with Blacktown City Demons as assistant to Ken Schembri in 1995.

UNDER 21	
Hurstville	0
Trasandinos	1
Prairiewood Utd	0
Parramatta City	6
Alexandria Warr	3
Sydney District	1

UNDER 18	
Hurstville	1
Trasandinos	0
Prairiewood Utd	3
Parramatta City	3
Alexandria W	



ALL THE MINOR SEMI FINAL RECORDS

MINOR SEMI FINAL RECORD SCORE:

Adelaide City 4 — Wollongong City 0 (1992/93)

MINOR SEMI FINAL RECORD CROWD:

11,230 for Marconi v UTS Olympic at St George Stadium, Sydney (1985 Nth Div.)

MINOR SEMI FINAL HIGHEST SINGLE GAME AGGREGATE SCORE:

Six goals: Marconi 3 — Apia Leichhardt 3 (1984 Northern Division) and Marconi 3 — UTS Olympic 3 (1985 Northern Division)

MINOR SEMI FINAL BEST GOALSCORING PERFORMANCE:

Carl Veart (2 goals for Adelaide City v UTS Olympic in 1991/92 plus 2 goals for Adelaide City v Wollongong City in 1992/93) and Kevin Muscat (2 goals for South Melbourne v Sydney United in 1994/95).

MINOR SEMI FINAL WINNERS TO TAKE TITLE:

Marconi (1988)
UTS Olympic (1989/90)
Adelaide City (1991/92)
Adelaide City (1993/94)

MINOR SEMI FINAL RESULTS DOWN THE YEARS:

1984 — (Sth Div) Heidelberg 0 —
Brisbane Lions 0
*Heid wins 3-2 on penalties
(Nth Div) Apia Leichhardt 3 — Marconi 3
*Apia wins 4-3 on penalties

1985 — (Sth Div) Preston 2 — Heidelberg 0
(Nth Div) Marconi 3 — UTS Olympic 3
*Marconi wins 7-6 on penalties

1986 — (Sth Div) Melbourne City 2 — Sunshine Geo. Cross 0
(Nth Div) UTS Olympic 2 — Marconi 1

1988 — Marconi 2 — South Melbourne 1

1989 — UTS Olympic 3 — Melbourne Knights 2

89/90 — UTS Olympic 1 — South Melbourne 0

90/91 — Adelaide City 1 — Marconi 0

91/92 — Adelaide City 2 — UTS Olympic 1

92/93 — Adelaide City 4 — Wollongong City 0

93/94 — Adelaide City 3 — Marconi 1

94/95 — Sydney United 1 — South Melbourne 3

Cut-throat clash not the end of the road

History suggests that the mid-week Ericsson Cup Minor Semi Final may still be of major importance in the championship race this season.

It might look bleak for the two clubs involved in the mid-week eliminator, one of them facing two testing knock-out finals in a four day span this week.

Yet the winner of this last four knock-out final has continued on the momentum four times in the past eight seasons by going on to win the national crown.

And seven of the last nine minor semi final winners have all gone on down the rocky road of sudden death to make it through to grand final day.

Adelaide City have made this game their own in recent times, having played in and won four of the last five minor semi finals, going on to three grand finals and two titles (1991/92 and 1993/94) from that launching pad during that period.

The Zebras join Marconi in 1988 and UTS Olympic in 1989/90 as the teams to have come through this route to ultimate Ericsson Cup success.

Since Olympic forced its way through the 1986 minor semi to ultimate defeat in that season's national play-off, Marconi, Olympic (twice) and Adelaide City (three times) have all come the same path through to grand final day.

Adelaide City, Olympic and Marconi have dominated the minor semi final series down the years, featuring in four, six and five of the 14 played in history respectively.

The Zebras have won four, Olympic three and Marconi two in that ten year span.

Adelaide City's four finals in four years between 1991 and 1994 equals Marconi's effort of playing in four successive minor semi finals between 1984 and 1988.

The successive minor semi final meetings between Marconi and UTS Olympic in 1985 and 1986 helped build a remarkable finals rivalry between the two

clubs.

The two clubs met in knock-out finals four times in four successive finals series between 1984 and 1988 (elimination finals in 1984 and 1988) before graduating to two memorable successive grand final meetings in 1989 and 1989/90.

Those six finals battles over consecutive seasons between two clubs remains as a league record.

The minor semi final format has remained virtually constant through the 11 years of Ericsson Cup title-deciding finals football.

From 1988 to 1991/92 the minor semi final remained a simple last four, loser eliminated battle under the top five system.

Under the current top six system devised for the 1992/93 season the game remained a last four knock-out game, however it is now contested between the two elimination final (4th v 6th and 3rd v 5th) winners.

Probably the greatest Ericsson Cup Minor semi final game in history was played at Sydney's St George Stadium back in 1985.

It front of a still record minor semi final crowd of over 11,000 fans cross-town rivals Marconi and UTS Olympic gunned it out to a 3-3 extra-time draw after the Fairfielders were forced to come from behind three times.

In what is still a finals

record marathon shoot-out (equalled by Marconi v Parramatta in 1990/91) the Fairfielders finally edged through 7-6 on penalties.

Last year's minor semi was as controversial as any, with Sydney United having Velimir Kupresak and Ivan Petkovic sent off within five minutes of each other inside the final 25 minutes of a passionately fought game against South Melbourne.

The Blues went ahead from the penalty spot after Kupresak's dismissal, substitute Mario Jermen levelled for then nine-man United, Kevin Muscat got his second to make it 2-1 and Ivan Kelic iced South's 3-1 win in the 81st minute.

All four goals and two send-offs came in possibly the most furious 13 minutes of finals action ever seen in the Ericsson Cup.



Victory is sweet: South Melbourne's Kevin Muscat and Dean Anastasiadis celebrate their dramatic minor semi-final win over Sydney United last year.



BY GREG BLAKE

ALL THE PRELIMINARY FINAL RECORDS

PRELIMINARY FINAL RECORD SCORE:
UTS Olympic 3 - Apia Leichhardt 0 (1984 Northern Division).

PRELIMINARY FINAL RECORD CROWD:

11,507 for Adelaide City v South Melbourne at Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide (1990/91).

PRELIMINARY FINAL HIGHEST SINGLE GAME AGGREGATE SCORE:

Eight goals: Preston 4 - South Melbourne 4 (1985 Southern Division).

PRELIMINARY FINAL BEST GOALSCORING PERFORMANCE:

Stuart Stevenson (3 goals for Heidelberg United v Melbourne Knights in 1984) and Charlie Egan (3 goals for South Melbourne v Preston in 1985) and Mark Viduka (3 goals for Melbourne Knights v South Melbourne in 1994/95).

PRELIMINARY FINAL WINNERS TO TAKE TITLE:

Marconi (1988)
UTS Olympic (1989/90)
South Melbourne (1990/91)
Adelaide City (1991/92)
Adelaide City (1993/94)
Melbourne Knights (1994/95)

PRELIMINARY FINAL RESULTS DOWN THE YEARS:

(All matches in the home city of first-named clubs)

1984 - (Sth Div) Heidelberg Utd 3 - Melb Knights 1
(Nth Div) UTS Olympic 3 - Apia Leichhardt 1

1985 - (Sth Div) Preston 4 - South Melbourne 4
* Preston wins 5-4 on penalties
(Nth Div) Marconi 1 - Sydney United 0

1986 - (Sth Div) Melbourne City 2 - Melb Zebras 1
(Nth Div) UTS Olympic 4 - Sydney United 3

1988 - Marconi 2 - Wollongong City 0

1989 - UTS Olympic 1 - St George 0

89/90 - UTS Olympic 2 - Melbourne Knights 1

90/91 - South Melbourne 1 - Adelaide City 0

91/92 - Adelaide City 2 - South Melbourne 0

92/93 - Adelaide City 3 - South Melbourne 1

93/94 - Adelaide City 2 - South Melbourne 0

94/95 - Melbourne Knights 3 - South Melbourne 2

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ONE STEP FROM GLORY

The heartbreak of preliminary finals



season; one step from a place in the record books in the league's showpiece game and only one loss away from a hugely anti-climactic end of the road.

Although most clubs and coaches won't admit it publicly, sometimes just getting to the grand final is victory in itself and winning it, merely a bonus.

As the fans of the grand final teams can boast: "At least we got there."

We remember the grand final teams and the great games, the goals and the hard-luck stories of the biggest day on the domestic calendar.

Under darkened Melbourne skies and on the sodden Olympic Park turf the explosive forward assured his own place in league history with a hat-trick which broke South Melbourne's spirits and set the Melbourne Knights back on course for a maiden championship.

It was Viduka's first game

back after returning from the World Youth Championships, having missed the opening two finals games as his Knights crashed in successive weeks to Adelaide City.

His hat-trick was only the fourth in Ericsson Cup finals history — the first by a teenager — and his performance in the 3-2 squeaker was surely the difference between the Knights and a South Melbourne side going into the game with all the momentum.

Reduced to just 10 men after Danny Tiatto was sent off inside 14 minutes the Knights rolled to a date with premiership destiny on the broad shoulders of Viduka, his individual effort one of the most memorable in finals history.

As for the Blues, who now even recalls that they had set the finals series alight in previous games or that Con Boutsianis scored a nearly as memorable double in that defeat against the Knights. For that is the way it is at this stage of the finals, just ninety minutes stands between history and anonymity for the competing Teams when the season gets down to this weekend's cut-throat Ericsson Cup Preliminary Final.

That is the frustration of this penultimate game of the

appearances by the Zebras in subsequent years.

Last year the Knights made it four consecutive seasons in which South Melbourne fell one game shy of the grand final.

Had fate shined on the Blues in this game the Melbourne club could now boast five straight grand finals between 1991 and 1995.

Conversely, that 1991 defeat in the preliminary final cost Adelaide City the boast of an all-time record five consecutive Ericsson Cup Grand Finals.

That remarkable Adelaide City-South Melbourne

Elimination Final) ever scored have been produced in this game, with Viduka's effort last year the most recent.

In 1984 Stuart Stevenson scored all three goals for Heidelberg United in a 3-1 win over the Melbourne Knights in the Southern Division last but one game of the year.

One year later, again in a Southern Division play-off, South Melbourne's Charlie Egan grabbed three of his club's four goals in a 4-4 extra time draw with Preston.

This game is recalled as one of the most spectacular in finals history, with the eight goal aggregate scoreline a play-off record in itself.

The lead changed four times during the game, Egan putting the Blues ahead 1-0, equalising at 2-2 and putting South Melbourne ahead 3-2 before Preston took the game to overtime with a late Gary Cole equaliser.

Preston took the lead for a second time before Doug Brown made it 4-4 and pushed the match to a penalty shoot-out.

In a result which has become habitual for South Melbourne in recent years the Blues eventually lost the preliminary final of that season, going down 5-4 from the spot.

South Melbourne's league record of six preliminary final appearances is tempered by its single win in the most heartbreaking game of the year.

The preliminary final element of the play-offs has remained constant throughout the 11 years of title-deciding finals series. From 1984 to 1986 the two NSL division - play-off system meant two such finals, with the beaten team from the major semi final taking on the minor semi final winner for a shot at the grand final. This system continued from 1988 to 1991/92, with just a single preliminary final in the revamped one division national league format.

Under the current top six system devised for the 1992/93 season on, the stakes for the preliminary final stayed identical, with the minor semi final winner going in against the major semi loser on that team's prized double chance.



Mark Viduka: Only teenager to score hat-trick in finals.

But who ever remembers the team which came third?

Who recalls the coaches and players who came so close but were resigned only to watching on grand final day and dreaming what might have been?

South Melbourne knows the feeling better than most, having made losing the preliminary final an art form in recent years. The Blues have lost the past four successive preliminary finals and played in the last five, four times in succession against Adelaide City in a remarkable series between the two clubs in the 1990's.

South Melbourne beat Adelaide City in this game in 1990/91 on the road to the title that season, but were denied a further three consecutive grand final

dynasty in the preliminary final is a record in itself, being the only time in finals history that two clubs have met in the same final in four successive seasons.

The preliminary final has become a handy guide to grand final success in recent years.

In six of the past eight seasons the preliminary final winner has gone on to win the big game, with Adelaide City (1992/93) and UTS Olympic (1989) the only two teams to luck out in the grand final after wins in the penultimate game.

The preliminary final holds pride of place for individual goalscorers in finals history.

Three of the only four finals hat-tricks (the fourth by Frank Farina in the 1986 Northern Division



Victorian Ladders



PREMIER LEAGUE LADDER

FIRSTS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Suns. Georgies	14	12	2	0	26	8	38
Bent. Greens	14	11	1	2	36	13	34
Altona Magic	14	10	1	3	31	14	31
Heidelberg Utd	14	8	3	3	34	18	27
Thomast. Zebras	14	7	3	4	24	20	24
North Geelong	14	6	2	6	18	23	20
Bulleen Lions	14	5	4	5	18	16	19
Green Gully	14	4	6	4	19	19	18
Port Melbourne	14	3	6	5	26	28	15
Box Hill Inter	14	4	2	8	18	30	14
St Albans	14	3	3	8	15	22	12
Fawkner	14	2	3	9	14	30	9
Springvale City	14	2	2	10	16	35	8
Albion	14	1	2	11	12	31	5

RESERVES

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Pt Melb. Sharks	14	9	2	3	34	17	29
Thomastown	13	9	1	3	36	14	28
Bentleigh Green	13	9	1	3	36	23	28
Heidelberg Utd	13	8	0	5	38	30	24
Bulleen	13	7	2	4	28	17	23
Sunshine GC	14	5	5	4	27	26	20
Box Hill Inter	14	5	4	5	24	27	19
Albion	13	6	1	6	28	37	19
Green Gully	14	5	3	6	28	25	18
Fawkner	14	5	3	6	22	36	18
Springvale City	14	3	4	7	34	33	13
Altona Gate	13	4	1	8	28	36	13
St Albans	14	2	5	7	15	25	11
North Geelong	14	2	0	12	18	50	6

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION 1

FIRSTS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Sp. White Eagles	8	6	1	1	19	6	19
Kingston City	8	4	3	1	9	5	15
West. Suburbs	8	4	3	1	8	4	15
C'don City Dons	8	4	2	2	18	10	14
Lalor Utd	8	4	1	3	24	13	13
Werribee City	8	4	1	3	14	8	13
Preston Lions	8	3	4	1	11	7	13
Moorabbin City	8	4	1	3	13	13	13
Richmond	8	1	7	0	9	8	10
Don'ster Rovers	8	2	3	3	10	12	9
Northcote City	8	1	3	4	5	10	6
Westgate	8	1	3	4	8	15	6
Broadmeadows	8	1	1	6	8	21	4
Glen Eira City	8	0	1	7	4	28	1

RESERVES

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Richmond	8	6	2	0	19	6	20
Moorabbin City	7	6	1	0	19	6	19
Croydon City	8	5	1	2	20	5	16
Don'ster Rovers	8	5	0	3	23	9	15
Preston Lions	7	5	0	2	16	11	15
Werribee City	8	4	2	2	14	9	14
Lalor United	8	4	0	4	14	12	12
Kingston City	8	3	2	3	17	12	11
Northcote City	8	3	1	4	12	15	10
West. Suburbs	6	2	1	3	13	18	7
Sp. White Eagles	8	2	0	6	20	23	6
Westgate	7	2	0	5	6	28	6
Broadmeadows	7	0	1	6	5	20	1
Glen Eira City	8	0	1	7	8	32	1

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION 2

FIRSTS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Sth Dandenong	8	6	1	1	20	0	19
Westvale	8	6	0	2	33	9	18
Altona East	8	5	2	1	16	6	17
Ess. Brun. Royals	8	3	3	2	8	5	12
Waverley City	8	3	3	2	13	13	12
Regent Bulla	8	2	5	1	6	4	11
Altona City	8	3	2	1	8	9	11
Knox City	8	3	2	3	6	13	11
Frankston Pines	8	1	5	2	11	10	8
East Richmond	7	2	1	4	10	12	7

RESERVES

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Langwarrin	8	6	1	1	29	8	19
Stonnington	8	6	1	1	24	8	19
Sunbury Utd	8	6	1	1	11	3	19
S'shine Heights	8	5	1	2	22	5	16
Nth Coburg Utd	8	4	2	2	12	12	14
Moreland City	8	4	1	3	12	10	13
Seaford Utd	8	3	2	3	21	15	11
Monbulk	8	3	2	3	15	11	11



	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Mooroolbark	8	2	0	6	5	13	6
Nunawading City	8	1	3	4	6	19	6
Oakleigh	8	1	3	4	5	23	6
Bell Park	7	1	2	4	11	14	5

RESERVES

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Frank. Pines	8	7	1	0	19	3	22
Waverley City	8	6	0	2	32	9	18
Altona City	8	6	0	2	29	14	



ALBION 2 SPRINGVALE 2

BY JOHN RIGAS

The Albion Redsox came from behind twice to snatch a 2-2 draw against a determined Springvale Vales at Selwyn Park on Sunday.

Springvale took the lead in the 13th minute when Andy Lancaster found the back of the net with a header via a freekick from Tony Lettieri.

New recruit Carlos Retre levelled the score in the 32nd minute when he shot from close range.

Two minutes into the second-half Springvale's

David Grella increased the visitors lead when he shot from inside the six yard box.

Former Vales player Mark Wilson put Albion back on level terms as he took on the Springvale defence and produced a powerful shot in the 83rd minute.

REDSOX: Brian, Grinuad (Patsman), Osman, Lucchesi, Wilson, Donnelly, Collins, Retre, Sevin, Geri, Kuyucuogallari (Vesnauer sent off).

VALES: Christov, Lettieri, De La Plaza, Razzi, Dell'Aquila (A. Vargas), Impellezeri, D. Grella,

Lancaster, Rosa, Craig, R. Vargas.

VOTES: 3-Wilson (Redsox), 2-Geri (Redsox), 1-Lucchesi (Redsox).

REFEREE: Cain Naumcevski.

GREEN GULLY 2 NTH GEELONG 2

BY ZORAN
MILENKOVSKI

Two penalty saves from North Geelong Warriors goalkeeper Joey Didulica and two disallowed goals for Green Gully Cavaliers, enabled the Warriors to snatch a draw at Gully Reserve.

North Geelong took the lead in the 27th minute when Ante Deak found Mijo Trupkovic in the box who fired home.

In the second stanza Cavs player John Waddell crossed the ball for Vlad Babic to level the score.

In the 66th minute a Charlie Fitzpatrick cross was met by striker John Didulica who headed home to restore the lead.

Green Gully equalised in the 79th minute when Peter Spiteri supplied Jani Suric who finished the excellent lead up work to score from the edge of the box.

CAVALIERS: Vella, Cimino, Douglas, Chetcuti, Lynch (Genovesi), Suric, Waddell, Nescsi, Crodden Babic.

WARRIORS: Joey Didulica, Skoko, Cosic, McAuliffe, Medved, Rajher, Deak (O'Sullivan), John Didulica, Trupkovic, Fitzpatrick Dimovski (Saric).

VOTES: 3-Joey Didulica (Warriors), 2-John Didulica (Warriors), 1-Waddell (Cavaliers).

REFEREE: John Fraser.

ST ALBANS 2 ALTONA 3

BY LUKE BUTTIGIEG

Defending champions, Altona Magic, recorded a hard fought 3-2 win over the St Albans Saints in atrocious conditions at Churchill Reserve.

Altona's Sash Bevincovski scored his first of a double with a powerfully taken penalty in the fifth minute, before a Mick Colina header levelled the scores 16 minutes later.

With the games intensity seemingly dropping, Chris Emsovska set up Bevincovski in the 74th minute for what looked like the winner.

Simon Micevski's 89th minute goal gave Altona a 3-1 lead but St Albans new recruit, veteran Paul Lewis, scored a minute later to put

some respect back into the scoreline.

SAINTS: Acevski, Rados, Mikulic, M. Colina (Filipovic), Movric, Razov, Jolic, Markovac, P. Lewis, Milanovic, Grganovic.

MAGIC: McGrath, Atanasovski, Tasevski, Velkovski, T. Markovski, Runje, Micevski, Emsovska, Bevincovski, Georgopoulos (Petrovski), Petrov (Cvetkovski).

REFEREE: Gerry Connolly.

VOTES: 3-Bevincovski (Magic), 2-Emsovska (Magic), 1-Jolic (Saints).

THOMASTOWN 3 BULLEEN 2

BY NICHOLAS
TZAERIS

A Danny Gnjidic double helped Thomastown prevail over old foes, Bulleen, in Sundays muddy battle for fifth spot at Partridge Reserve.

The Zebras overcame the absence of the injured Seb Emmanuel through an effective showing by Kiwi, Harry Ngata, in midfield and good support by the ever effective, Joe Tricarico.

It was Ngata who set the scene for a high scoring game by scoring the games first but best goal after five minutes when his powerful long range drive was out of Jeff Oliver's reach.

Dale White got a scrappy equaliser for the Lions before Gnjidic's goals on either side of the break gave the Zebras a two goal lead.

Gnjidic's first goal was a result of an uncharacteristic blunder by Oliver who was embarrassingly dispossessed by the striker who scored into an empty net.

White gave the Lions something to play for with his second midway through the second half but Thomastown defiantly held on to claim the three points.

ZEBRAS: Gonzalez, Banini, Angelovski, Karic, Della Rocca, Cuvulevski (Bichler), Gnjidic, Tricarico, Mazzini, Iacovitti, Ngata.

LIONS: Oliver, Valentic, Stojcevski, Tsiakos, Slifkas (Di Iorio), Sonsini, McAleer, White, Grbac, Everett, Liparoti.

REFEREE: Andrew Stacey.

VOTES: 3-Ngata (Zebras), 2-Tricarico (Zebras), 1-White (Lions).

BENTLEIGH 6 FAWKNER 2

BY ROD BOWLES

Bentleigh Greens striker Zoran Todorovski ended his playing stint in sensational fashion when he scored a hat-

trick. He is set to go overseas in the near future.

Todorovski had an impact on the scoreboard in the first minute when Andrew Charalambous supplied him with a through ball. Ike Alagiozidis added a second in the 22nd minute with a 30 yard freekick.

Fawkner midfielder Michael Branov scored in the 48th minute to bring the Blues back in the game. Fawkner's joy was short lived when Alagiozidis converted a penalty in the 60th minute to end any chance the visitors had.

The Green machine scored two goals in two minutes when Lee Lutton and then Todorovski completed his hat-trick six minutes from full-time and Fawkner's Marco Di Sauro completed the days scoring.

GREENS: Jones, Drakos, Micheil (Asimicopoulos), Thearoas, Crivari, Kourkoutzelos (J. Constantinou), Kalimeris, Todorovski, Alagiozidis, Lutton, Charalambous.

BLUES: Beattie, Kuzman, Schipano, Ferla (sent off), Branov (sent off), Tramontana (Tortevski), Stergiopoulos, Vassiliadis (Gymnopoulos), Mihocic, Psarros, Thodis (Di Sauro).

VOTES: 3-Alagiozidis (Greens), 2-Todorovski (Greens), 1-Drakos (Greens).

REFEREE: Vince Celestino.

BOX HILL 0 SUNSHINE 2

BY ANTHONY PELUSO

Sunshine Georgies continued its excellent form with an effortless 2-0 win over Box Hill Inter at Wembley Park.

Box Hill were already up against it before the match started, as they were missing four main players. But in the first few minutes of the game they had the ball more in their penalty area than Sunshine did.

An injury to Carlos Castro seemed to unsettle Box Hill as Sunshine began to find their rhythm. In the last few moments of the first half, decisive events were to occur.

In the 43rd minute Spencer Field had a shot on target which struck the crossbar and Juan Nilo was

from the edge of the area.

Last weeks four goal hero Nick Tsaltas added to his goal tally with a superbly taken volley from Alex Duric's cross in the 54th minute.

Thirteen minutes later Nick Papadopoulos increased the margin with a header that slipped through goalkeeper Glenn Clarke's hands and into the net.

Leading scorer Bobby Despotovski grabbed a consolation goal late on from a terrific solo run and shot past on loan 'keeper Jim Kourtsis.

Heidelberg have yet to find a replacement for sacked coach Andy Bozikas but he will be announced shortly as the club gears up for another crack at the A-League.

SHARKS: Kourtsis, Argyriou, Dimitrellos,

Kyriakopoulos, Gotis,

Palamaras, Svilgos (Bell),

Efstathiou, Papadopoulos

(Latinopoulos), Duric,

Tsaltas (Komilios).

UNITED: Clarke,

Georgiadis, Scott, I.

Tsoumerkas, J. Tsoumerkas,

Hasler (M.P. Tyrikos),

Kiratzoglou, McNicol,

Obradovic (Hastie), Vlahos,

Despotovski.

VOTES: 3-Palamaras

(Sharks), 2-L. Tsoumerkas

(United), 1-Papadopoulos

(Sharks).

REFEREE: Juergen Annus.

TACKLE DIABETES



PREMIER LEAGUE ROUND 14

Albion Redox 2 (Retre, Wilson) — Springvale City Vales 2 (Lancaster, D. Grella) Box Hill Inter 0 — Sunshine Georgies 2 (Nilo, Cassar)

Thomastown Zebras 3 (Ngata, Gnjidic 2) — Bulleen Lions 2 (White 2)

St Albans Saints 2 (M. Colina, Lewis) — Altona Magic 3 (Bevincovski 2, Micevski)

Bentleigh Greens 6 (Todorovski 3, Alagiozidis 2, Lutton) — Fawkner Blues 2 (Branov, Di Sauro)

Port Melbourne Sharks 3 (Palamaras, Tsaltas, Papadopoulos) — Heidelberg United 1 (Despotovski)

Green Gully Cavaliers 2 (Babic, Suric) — North Geelong Warriors 2 (Trupkovic, John Didulica)

LEADING GOALSCORERS

15 — Despotovski (Heidelberg)

11 — Nilo (Sunshine)

on hand to head the ball in to give Sunshine the lead.

In the 46th minute Anthony Cassar was in the penalty area to tap the ball in, after Jamie McMinnie supplied the cross.

Sunshine were denied a penalty in the dying seconds of the first-half as Cassar was upended.

INTER: Keigh, Pansino, Tartaglia, Lennon, Dai Ben, Inglese, Tsakiris, Marcin (Vincenzini), Roodhouse, Chirico, Castra (Sette).

GEORGIES: Wardle, Cassar, Dragicevic, Field, Aretis, Nilo, Daglaras, Tsiristakis, De La Plaza, McMinnie, (Makris), De Bono.

VOTES: 3-Dragicevic (Georgies), 2-Cassar (Georgies), 1, McMinnie (Georgies).

REFEREE: Nestor Zachariadis.

PORT MELB 3 HEIDELBERG 1

BY DWYGH
TUFFNELL

Port Melbourne continued its surge up the Premier League ladder with a 3-1 win over early season front-runners, Heidelberg United.

Following that early second defeat in a row Port, however, have reversed their trend and seem to be gaining momentum under coach Frank Arok.

Port went ahead in the 28th minute when skipper Nick Palamaras blasted in

RECORDED RESULTS SERVICE

0055 38887

SUNDAY

MATCH RESULTS

SERVICE

◆ Premier League
◆ State League Div. 1
◆ Provisional
League Divisions 4&5

(Updated by 6.30pm
each Sunday evening)

0055 38878

SATURDAY

MATCH RESULTS

SERVICE

◆ Premier League
◆ State League
Divisions 1-3

(Updated by 6.30pm
each Saturday evening)

0055 38898

SATURDAY

MATCH RESULTS

SERVICE

◆ State League
Division 4
◆ Provisional
League Divisions 1-3

(Updated by 6.30pm
each Saturday evening)

(PUBLIC HOLIDAYS: 0055 38878)

NEXT WEEKS FIXTURES

NO FIXTURES SCHEDULED IN
PREMIER LEAGUE UNTIL
SUNDAY, JUNE 2



NEW FACES FOR TESTING TOUR

National coach Tom Sermanni has announced some surprise selections for the upcoming tour of Brazil and USA with three more players set to make their international debut on what will be a torrid test for the Australians.

The three rewarded for impressive recent performances including the National Training Camp held earlier this month are Kelly Golebiowski, Shelley Youman, and Belinda Kitching.

Golebiowski, aged just 14, is a player well beyond her years, and has been a regular fixture in the NSW Women's State League First Grade since the tender age of 12. Going into camp as a standby player, she made the most of her first opportunity in national senior company and did not disappoint.

"Kelly reminded me of Casagrande when she first came into the group," said Sermanni. "She has all the confidence and ability, and wasn't fazed by the older players. From a coaching point of view, it's great."

A left-sided player, Golebiowski is a natural striker, but has the football brain and ability to slot in to any position on the park. "Kelly is one of a growing breed of players that you can put anywhere and know they'll go out and do the job — good allround footballers," said Sermanni. "But in a sense, you would want Kelly more forward. She is so creative, potentially she can win a match for you."

Golebiowski not only impressed on the pitch, but also proved her worth in the physical testing conducted at camp. Stocky in build, she perhaps surprised some in being the third quickest behind Lisa Casagrande and Cindy Doyle. "This was another factor — if her physical results weren't good, she wouldn't be coming on tour," advised Sermanni. "But physically, she can compete at international level."

Twice the age of Golebiowski, is Youman from Newcastle in NNSW. At age 28, she makes her first ever Australian selection at any age level. Married with three children, Youman's tale is something quite the opposite to young Golebiowski.

"Shelley is very competitive, a tenacious player, and dedicated," said Sermanni. "She has come into the system very late, but has worked hard to get an opportunity. She performed well in camp,

and now is the ideal chance for her to seize that opportunity."

The selection of these two players from contrasting situations is tangible evidence of a changed national selection policy, much more flexible in many ways than previous times. Age is obviously not a discriminating factor, and players do not necessarily climb the ladder through the traditional system.

"At the end of the day, I pick the ones I think are good enough to do the job required of them," explained Sermanni.

Also in her first senior Australian team is Queensland goalkeeper Belinda Kitching. Agile and reliable, she is an imposing figure between the sticks. At just 18, Kitching is also enjoying a meteoric rise up the ranks, especially considering she only put on the gloves five years ago after starting as a field player.

The majority of the 18-member team is the same as that which won the M-Wey Tri-Series in Auckland in March and so overall is a good combination of youth and experience.

Kim Revell and Bridgette Starr, missing from New Zealand due to injury, make their return. Tammie Thornton, a late call-up for Auckland, retains her place in the side. Lizzy Clayton and Michelle Watson, originally in tour calculations, both declared themselves unavailable due to work commitments.

The tour however will prove to be much more testing and challenging than that experienced in

Auckland. Up against Olympic games qualifiers USA and Brazil, both on their home soil, and in final preparations for their assault in Atlanta, the Aussies will find the going rough.

The emerging Korea, who defeated Australia in Auckland, will be eager to repeat the result, their dogged style always difficult to overcome. Argentina was easily beaten by the Australians last year whilst preparing for the World Cup, but a year on and with a new Australian line-up, things may now be different.

"We will always go with high expectations," said Sermanni. "But we are looking to adopt a different attitude. We need to take a different approach on tour now — no longer can we go with thoughts of just surviving.

We aim to make a good impression, put in a good football performance. I never like to say we'll win or lose, but (playing top level opposition) is not new to us any longer."

Sermanni added, "We need to start employing a winning attitude, which doesn't mean we will win, but we are past that stage of thinking we are out of our depth."

The Australians depart for Brazil from Sydney this coming Monday May 20. There they will take on Brazil, Korea and Argentina in a tournament scheduled from May 26 to June 2. Next stop is the United States where they will battle former World Champions USA in two matches.



Belinda Kitching: In the squad for Brazil and USA.

A Day to Remember

Every athlete dreams of representing her or his country one day, but when those dreams really become a reality, the moment is something to treasure forever.

The 14-year-old Kelly Golebiowski recalls the day last week when she discovered the news. "I didn't know what to say, my whole body went numb, I was speechless. Mr Sermanni rang my mum at work, and I found out when I got home from school. I didn't expect it at all."

The youngster reveals she was a bit nervous being up against the older players at camp, but obviously this has not hampered her performance. Golebiowski prefers to play as a striker, but is unsure of Sermanni's plans for her in the team.

Her trip to New Zealand last year with the Australian Junior team was her only previous time overseas, but obviously this tour will be vastly different and a huge experience for her.

The NSW ITC player is also a student at Westfields Sports High School, Sydney's first school with specialist sports personnel and programs for the development of elite athletes. She is one of five girls who are members of the mainly boys soccer program.

"We train before or after school every second day."

Golebiowski is a real "veteran" in the game, having played since the age of three in boys teams until joining the NSW Academy in 1994. "My brother played, and I wanted to play a sport," she recalls.

But soccer hasn't always played a central role in her life. Golebiowski has also been a force on the sprinting track, which explains her excellent physical testing results at camp.

"Before I came into the ITC and got into the State U16s, athletics was my main sport. Then when I was selected, I decided to concentrate on soccer — I can go further with that. And most of the other girls (in athletics) were a lot bigger than me. I still do it just for fun and to keep fit."

Shelley Youman expressed quite a different reaction on hearing of her selection. "I was pretty excited I suppose. I probably just thought of how the kids are going to cope for three weeks without me. It's the longest I've ever been away from them. I feel sorry for the babysitters!"

Shelley and husband Mark have three children — Matt (5 years), Remi (2) and Isaac (1). Spending money for the trip will be her Mothers' Day present.

"I went to camp hoping I would get selected, but I



Kelly Golebiowski: A real "veteran" - at only 14.

didn't know. This is really a bonus," said the 28-year-old first time representative.

"I played state mainly as a junior, but as I got older I didn't really bother. I had other interests at that time, and things were a bit unprofessional back then, I couldn't afford to pay to go away."

Youman is making a concentrated comeback into the game and is now a member of the NNSW ITC coached by Mark Jones.

"My coach said I should give it a go. He helped me a lot and gave me the confidence. I felt alright after the first camp."

On the subject of ambitions for the future, Youman is taking one step at a time. "I never really expected to get this far."

"I'd like to think of the future, but whatever comes after this tour will be a bonus. At my age I guess I've got to prove I'll still be around."

Unlike the other two players, goalkeeper Belinda Kitching was already a member of the Australian OAP squad, named in January this year. Nevertheless, she is more than aware that at the top, nothing is certain, and expressed genuine delight on learning of her selection for the tour.

"I was really surprised and excited," she enthused. "For the last couple of weeks I've been really concentrating on getting into the team. Going into camp, I just kept thinking 'I've got to make it for the tour', and when it happened, I was so shocked, my heart was racing."

"I'm getting a bit nervous, but I'll try to put that behind me," said the 18-year-old of her prospects on tour.

Kitching a year ago, didn't really expect to reach the top in so short a time. "In the back of my mind I thought I'd like to, but I didn't think I'd make it this early."

"When I was picked in the squad after the Nationals, I was so happy, especially when you think I've only been playing in goal for five years and really started to treat it more professionally."

If I didn't make it in that squad back then, I wouldn't have really minded because I'm so young. I was so surprised when I did."

"I'll just go forward now," she concluded, in referring to the work ahead of her.

AUSTRALIAN TEAM

Brazil/USA Tour May-June 1996

Sharon	BLACK	SA
Katrina	BOYD	NSW
Lisa	CASAGRANDE	NNSW
Sarah	COOPER	NT
Sonia	GEGENHUBER	QLD
Kelly	GOLEBIOWSKI	NSW
Sunni	HUGHES	NNSW/Japan
Angela	IANNOTTA	NSW/Italy
Belinda	KITCHING	QLD
Louise	McMURTRIE	QLD
Joanne	PETERS	NSW
Kim	REVELL	QLD
Bridgette	STARR	NSW
Kristyn	SWAFFER	SA
Tammie	THORNTON	QLD
Sacha	WAINWRIGHT	ACT
Tracey	WHEELER	WA
Shelley	YOUMAN	NNSW

OFFICIALS:

National Coach:	Tom	SERMANNI
Asst Coach:	Jeff	OLVER
Scholarship Coach:	Leigh	WARDELL
Doctor:	Dr Graham	BISHOP
Physiotherapist:	Ed	HOLLIS
Tour Leader:	Maria	BERRY

ITALY's Serie A & B

TABLES

SERIE A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Milan	34	21	10	3	60	24	73
Juventus	34	19	8	7	58	35	65
Lazio	34	17	8	9	66	38	59
Fiorentina	34	17	8	9	53	41	59
Roma	34	16	10	8	51	34	58
Parma	34	16	10	8	44	31	58
Inter	34	15	9	10	51	30	54
Sampdoria	34	14	10	10	59	47	52
Vicenza	34	13	10	11	36	37	49
Udinese	34	11	8	15	41	49	41
Cagliari	34	11	8	15	34	47	41
Napoli	34	10	11	13	28	41	41
Atalanta	34	11	6	17	38	50	39
Piacenza	34	9	10	15	31	48	37
Bari	34	8	8	18	49	71	32
Torino	34	6	11	17	28	46	29
Cremonese	34	5	12	17	37	57	27
Padova	34	7	3	24	41	79	24

SERIE A

Atalanta	3	Padova	0
Bari	2	Juventus	2
Cagliari	2	Parma	0
Milan	7	Cremonese	1
Napoli	2	Udinese	1
Piacenza	0	Fiorentina	1
Roma	1	Inter	0
Torino	0	Lazio	2
Vicenza	2	Sampdoria	2

TABLES

SERIE B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Verona	34	17	10	7	47	28	61
Reggiana	34	14	12	8	37	27	54
Bologna	34	12	17	5	34	22	53
Perugia	34	14	11	9	46	38	53
Salernitana	34	13	12	9	39	26	51
Lucchese	34	12	14	8	40	37	50
Palermo	34	11	15	8	32	31	48
Cosenza	34	11	14	9	43	40	47
Cesena	34	12	10	12	46	43	46
Genoa	34	12	8	14	48	47	44
Venezia	34	10	13	11	29	34	43
Pescara	34	11	10	13	39	46	43
F Andria	34	9	14	11	39	37	41
Avellino	34	11	8	15	34	46	41
Foglia	34	11	8	15	27	44	41
Chievo V	34	7	19	8	32	29	40
Brescia	34	10	9	15	41	44	39
Ancona	34	10	9	15	38	44	39
Reggina	34	7	14	13	30	45	35
Pistoiese	34	7	11	16	32	45	32

SERIE B

Ancona	0	Chievo V	0
Cesena	2	Bologna	3
Cosenza	3	Venezia	1
Genoa	3	Avellino	0
Lucchese	1	F Andria	1
Palermo	1	Reggina	0
Perugia	1	Salernitana	2
Pistoiese	2	Foglia	3
Reggiana	3	Brescia	2
Verona	3	Pescara	0

Signori top scorer

Lazio striker Giuseppe Signori closed the Italian league season as joint Serie A top scorer last Sunday when his club beat relegated Torino 2-0 to secure a place in the UEFA Cup next season.

Meanwhile, Milan, crowned Italian champion

for the fourth time in five seasons earlier in the month, treated its home fans to a crushing 7-1 defeat of Serie B-bound Cremonese, the biggest win of a triumphant season.

Signori's ninth minute goal was his 24th but he shared the honours with



Igor Protti: Came from nowhere to joint top scorer.

May 23, decision day for Vialli

Italian ace Gianluca Vialli (right) wants to stay with Juventus next season and is not taking seriously lucrative offers from Glasgow Rangers and Chelsea, he said last week.

Vialli, whose contract comes to an end next month, ended weeks of silence on his future by saying he still hopes the club would give him a new deal.

"I still hope that I can stay with Juventus," he said. "Until they come and say 'thank-you and goodbye', I won't be looking closely at any other solution."

Juventus is a particularly hard club when it comes to dealing with star players. Last season they offloaded Roberto Baggio, the man who had taken them to trophy success in both Italy and Europe.

"I've no illusions, but I'd be sorry to go," said their 31-year-old skipper.

"Whatever happens, I wouldn't leave being bitter or angry."

"I can make what I consider to be an acceptable proposal to the club, and I'll know within a minute whether or not they want to keep me," he told the *Gazzetta dello Sport*.

Vialli said the decision whether he stays or leaves will come on May 23, the day after Juventus meet Ajax Amsterdam in the European Cup final here.

Rangers, who after eight consecutive Scottish league titles can guarantee the Italian a place in the European Cup next season, have reportedly offered him a three-year contract worth two million pounds a year.

Chelsea have come in with a lower offer and are unlikely to win the English premiership in 1996/97, after failing even to make the UEFA Cup next season.

However, the lure of life

Bari's Igor Protti, an unknown player at the start of the season, who put two past Juventus in a 2-2 draw that salvaged some pride for the relegated club.

Liberian George Weah scored twice for Milan, his first in the sixth minute taking a possible deflection off a defender and his second in the 59th putting the champions 2-1 up and opening the floodgates for the home team.

Demetrio Albertini made it 3-1 in the 61st, Christian Panucci made it 4-1 six minutes later and Milan then scored three goals in three minutes — two from Paolo di Canio in the 83rd and 85th sandwiching one from Zvonimir Boban in the 84th.

Slovenian attacker Matjaz Florijancic had scored for Cremonese in the 23rd minute.

With the league and relegation issues already settled, the only suspense in Sunday's final day of the league season was the hotly-contested battle for UEFA Cup places and the equally fierce fight to be crowned top goalscorer.

Lazio's victory, coupled with Parma's 2-0 defeat at Cagliari and Roma's 1-0 win over Inter, left Lazio sure of a UEFA Cup place as third-placed finishers on 59 points.

Fiorentina, who beat lowly Piacenza 1-0, finished level on points with Lazio and will also play in Europe.

Sacked for winning

Italy's top football coaches will all have the same abiding memory of the 1995-96 season when the final whistle blows on Sunday — the sack.

Fabio Capello, Nevio Scala and Giovanni Trapattoni have all been given their marching orders, while Lazio's Zdenek Zeman is hoping for a reprieve after a strong finish to a difficult season.

The intense pressure from club management, supporters and sponsors, along with a sometimes troublesome dressing room and a hostile press, make coaching in Italy a well-paid but thankless task.

Capello guided AC Milan to championship success four times in five seasons — and also won the European Cup — before realising the knives were out for him.

Now set to take over at Real Madrid, Capello was being offered a new contract which meant he would be sacked on the spot if he failed to win a title at the end of each season.

The pride of a man whose achievements also include inflicting England's only home defeat to Italy, at Wembley in 1973, would not allow him to sign and he was out of a job.

However, if Milan seems ungrateful, Parma is being no less so as it dismisses the enormously successful Scala.

Scala dragged the club from the oblivion of the Serie B to Serie A (1990) and went on to win a string of trophies — the Italian Cup (1992), European Cup Winners Cup (1993), European Super Cup (1994) and the UEFA Cup (1995).

Axed because this season's much-vaunted frontal assault on the league title failed, Scala was in tears at the 10-minute ovation he received on Sunday in his last home game in charge.

"With a show of affection like this, even rocks break," sobbed Scala after the 1-0 win over Torino.

"I had a lump in my throat during the lap of honour, the applause I received will always stay in my heart."

"After seven years, it was inevitable there'd be a need for new faces, new stimulus. I don't know what I'll do now. I might take a year off or look for another club, one like Parma."

Trapattoni, the most successful of all Italy's coaches, didn't even finish the season — his time at Cagliari ran out in February and he is now preparing for a return to Bayern Munich.



Nevio Scala: "With affection like this, even rocks break."

LEADING GOALSCORERS

24	Signori (Lazio)
22	Protti (Bari)
19	Chiesa (Samp)
17	Batistuta (Fiorentina)
15	Branca (Inter)
14	Bierhoff (Udinese)
13	Oliveira (Cagliari)
12	Casiraghi (Lazio)
	Amoruso (Padova)
	Caccia (Piacenza)
	Ganz (Inter)
	Vlaovic (Padova)
	Balbo (Roma)
	Ravanelli (Juventus)
	Otero (Vicenza)
	Andersson (Bari)

CUP WINNERS CUP

A EURO CUP FOR PARIS — AT LAST

Paris Saint Germain set aside its internal problems to win the European Cup Winners' Cup final last week beating Rapid Vienna 1-0.

Paris, riven by disputes between outgoing coach Luis Fernandez, chief executive Michel Denisot and the players, relied on 25-year-old defender Bruno

N'Gotty's 29th minute winner.

The rift was illustrated at the end of the match when Fernandez accompanied his two sons to applaud the Paris fans but there was little warmth in the embraces with the players on the victory podium.

Denisot, who only last week was lashing his players

for their collapse of form in the French league, said: "It's fabulous, I'm almost in tears.

"I'm so pleased for the players, for Luis Fernandez and for the fans. We did everything right," he added, visibly relieved to have won a European trophy after Paris had lost three successive European semi-finals.

Fernandez said: "Before there was Marseille, and now there is Paris Saint Germain. "As concerns me, I'm sticking to my decision. I won't be on the coach's bench next season. I'll discuss things with Denisot about my future and will see if I'm staying with the club or leaving," the 38-year-old former French international added.

Rapid's coach Ernst Dokupil said: "We lost the match in the first half. Paris attacked too quickly for us to organise at the back."

However, PSG should have scored many more as the Austrians, who lost 3-1 to Everton in the 1985 final, were outclassed.

N'Gotty's goal came from a short free-kick taken by French international Youri

Djorkaeff.

The defender's 30m shot deflected off Rapid defender Peter Schottel towards Michael Konsel, but the goalkeeper reacted too slowly as the ball crept into the bottom left corner.

Paris, whose victory gives France its second European trophy after Olympique Marseille's 1993 European Cup, suffered an early reverse when Brazilian playmaker Rai had to go off in the 12th minute, replaced by Panamanian Julio Cesar Dely Valdes, after injuring his left ankle.

The Austrians, whose top scorer Carsten Jancker was kept quiet by Alain Roche, failed to cope with the penetrative attacks prompted by French midfield hardman Daniel Bravo, but a mixture of bad judgment and hesitancy in front of goal saved Rapid.

French international striker Patrice Loko hesitated in the 44th minute when set free on the right by Djorkaeff. When he did cut the ball back towards Dely Valdes, two defenders converged to bundle the ball away.



Youri Djorkaeff: His free-kick resulted in PSG's goal.



Daniel Bravo: Prompted penetrative attacks.

Police detain French fans

Belgian police detained 250 French fans in central Brussels before the start of the first European Final held in the Belgian capital since the Heysel tragedy in 1985.

Spokesman Michael Jonniaux said a hard-core had caused trouble at an underground rail station, stopping trains and harassing passengers.

There were no injuries in the incident.

The PSG fans in red and blue scarves and shirts had earlier been baton charged by police in a rain-soaked Grand Place after they had taunted a group of Rapid Vienna supporters and hurled bottles and flowerpots at them.

French and Austrian fans were directed into separate areas of the 38,000 seater stadium, which was sold out. There was no violence as the fans entered the stadium now re-named the 'King Baudouin Stadium'.

Jonniaux said police armed with water cannons had taken steps to ensure both sets of fans would return to their coaches after the game, without meeting.

UEFA CUP FINAL — SECOND LEG:

CAN BORDEAUX DO A 'MILAN' ON BAYERN?

If Bordeaux can win this, it will close one of the most remarkable European stories ever.

Their journey began almost a year ago, soon after last season ended in fact, when they spent their (northern) summer holidays slogging away with 59 other 'hopefuls', in the Intertoto Cup.

That is an old competition once used for gambling pools, which has now become a back-door entrance for clubs that have failed to make it into Europe through the front door. (Bordeaux, finished only seventh in the French League last season).

The 'Girondins' had to play eight qualifying matches in all before they finally made it to the First Round Proper, which is where Bayern began their journey.

But, it's a tale of not only quantity, but quality too. European victories don't come better than Bordeaux's Quarter Final Second Leg demolition of no less an opponent, than mighty Milan.

Having not-unexpectedly gone down 0-2 in the first-leg

at the San Siro, the French league-strugglers refused to take part in a return-formality.

Back on home turf, they hit the Italian aristocrats of Baggio, Weah, Maldini etc. like no one had done since 1978.

Their international striker Christophe Dugarry who the 'Olyroos', may get the dubious pleasure of meeting in Miami, did most of the damage with a pair of well-taken goals.

Yet, despite that performance, Bayern's route to the Final has been no less difficult — and even more impressive. They hammered opponents like Benfica and Notts Forest out of sight (both 7-2 aggregate wins), while their 2-1 win over Barcelona in front of 110,000 at Nou Camp matches Bordeaux's job on Milan.

Whereas Bayern will be minus one key striker, Frenchman Jean-Pierre Papin, the French will be plus one as Dugarry returns, together with attacking midfielder Zinedine Zidane.

It could make all the

difference and make another Milan-type comeback possible — provided they can keep the German goal-scoring machine Jürgen Klinsmann quiet for a second time.

Bordeaux will be nervously aware that the scorer of 14 goals in Bayern's 11 UEFA Cup games, needs only to get one precious 'away goal', and the Frenchmen will have to reply with four. Nobody has done that to the Bavarians yet this season.

Bordeaux's German coach Gernot Rohr, a former team mate of Beckenbauer's at Bayern, will be faced with the classic dilemma of the two-legged tie.

He has to attack and in doing so, leaves his defence exposed to the counter-punch. It would be bad enough against a normal team, but one which has an in-form Klinsmann in it?

For Bordeaux — it will be the first European trophy ever. Bayern however, will join an elite group comprising of Ajax, Barcelona and Juventus as the only clubs to have won all three European Trophies.

When you look at the names of clubs who HAVEN'T managed to do that such as Milan, Real Madrid and Liverpool, you realise where this club stands in the European hierarchy.

Also, why Klinsmann couldn't get away fast enough from a so-called giant club like Spurs, the minute he got a little phone call from 'Kaiser Franz'.

CORRECTION
In ABSW of May 1, 1996 in the article entitled, 'UEFA Cup fans raise their standards', Bordeaux was incorrectly stated to be in Northern France.

This is of course incorrect. Bordeaux is on the Atlantic Ocean or western side of France and is most famous for its fine, red wines.

Also Bordeaux have previously made it to two European competition semi-finals.

Bordeaux can trace its origins back to 1883.

Also Edward Elgar wrote Pomp and Circumstance.

We are indebted to a number of readers who pointed out these errors.

BORDEAUX — route to the Final

Intertoto Cup — Group 5

(Played as a mini-league)

Norrkoping (Sweden) 6-2

Bohemians (Dublin) 2-0

Obodense (Denmark) 4-0

HJK Helsinki (Finland) 1-1



Intertoto Cup

2nd Round

Quarter Final

UEFA Cup

Preliminary Rd

First Round

Second Round

Third Round

Quarter Final

Semi-Final

FINAL

Eintracht Frankfurt
Heerenveen (Holland)

3-0
2-0

Karlsruhe (Germany)

2-0 2-2 (4-2)

Vardar Skopje (Macedonia)

2-0 1-1 (3-1)

Rotor Volgograd (Russia)

2-1 1-0 (3-1)

Real Betis (Spain)

2-0 1-2 (3-2)

AC Milan (Italy)

0-2 3-0 (3-2)

Slavia Prague (Czech Rep)

1-0 1-0 (2-0)

Bayern Munich (Germany)

0-2 ?

B. MUNICH — route to the Final

First Round

Second Round

Third Round

Quarter Final

Semi Final

FINAL

Loko Moscow (Russia)

0-1 5-0 (5-1)

Raith Rovers (Scotland)

2-0 2-1 (4-2)

Benfica Lisbon (Portugal)

4-1 3-1 (7-2)

Nottingham Forest (England)

2-1 5-1 (7-2)

Barcelona (Spain)

2-2 2-1 (4-3)

Bordeaux (France)

2-0 ?



NEWS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE



TEAM	
1 Brazil	88 Mauritania
2 Germany	89 Malta
3 Russia	90 Sudan
4 Italy	91 Malaysia
5 France	92 Cuba
6 Spain	93 Luxemburg
7 Sweden	94 Singapore
8 Argentina	95 St Vincent & Grenadines
9 Colombia	96 Albania
10 Czech Republic	97 Myanmar
11 Netherlands	98 Lebanon
12 Mexico	99 Uzbekistan
13 Denmark	100 India
14 USA	101 Kenya
15 Ghana	102 Niger
17 Zambia	104 Oman
18 Norway	105 Hong Kong
19 Romania	106 Bahrain
20 South Africa	107 Moldova
21 Portugal	108 Togo
22 Cote d'Ivoire	109 Burkina Faso
23 Tunisia	110 Ethiopia
24 England	111 Bangladesh
25 Bulgaria	112 Guatemala
26 Egypt	113 Malawi
27 Switzerland	114 New Zealand
28 Scotland	115 Indonesia
29 Croatia	116 Armenia
30 Japan	117 Venezuela
31 Turkey	118 Vietnam
32 Morocco	119 Iran
33 Cameroon	120 Faroe Islands
34 Chile	121 Guinea-Bissau
35 Saudi Arabia	122 Barbados
36 Uruguay	123 Gambia
37 Bolivia	124 Gambia
38 Ireland Republic	125 Namibia
39 Belgium	126 Grenada
40 Slovakia	127 St Lucia
41 Poland	128 Korea DPR
42 Ecuador	129 Azerbaijan
43 Nigeria	130 Iraq
44 Austria	131 Neth. Antilles
45 Israel	132 Turkmenistan
46 Greece	133 Antigua
47 Algeria	134 Panama
48 Gabon	135 Estonia
49 Lithuania	136 Surinam
50 Australia	137 Dominican Rep.
51 Trinidad & Tobago	138 Puerto Rico
52 Jamaica	139 Cayman
53 Iceland	140 Congo
54 Honduras	141 Dominica
55 Finland	142 Madagascar
56 Sierra Leone	143 Sri Lanka
57 China PR	144 Syria
58 Northern Ireland	145 Nepal
59 Slovenia	146 Cape Verde Islands
60 Korea Republic	147 Fiji
61 Latvia	148 Jordan
62 Mali	149 St Kitts & Nevis
63 Canada	150 Bermuda
64 Thailand	151 Burundi
65 Senegal	152 Lesotho
66 UAE	153 Laos
67 Wales	154 Swaziland
68 Paraguay	155 San Marino
69 Kuwait	156 Haiti
70 Ukraine	157 Guyana
71 Zimbabwe	158 Mauritius
72 Georgia	159 Tahiti
73 Zaire	160 Liechtenstein
74 El Salvador	161 Botswana
75 Hungary	162 Kyrgyzstan
76 Mozambique	163 Benin
77 Cyprus	164 Macao
78 Tanzania	165 Pakistan
79 Peru	166 Kazakhstan
80 Guinea	167 Tajikistan
81 Angola	168 Maldives Republic
82 Yugoslavia	169 Somalia
83 Uganda	170 Philippines
84 Costa Rica	171 Brunel, 172 Rwanda, 173 Aruba, 174 Nicaragua, 175 Solomon Islands, 176 Belize, 177 Libya, 178 Seychelles, 179 Djibouti, 180 Chinese Taipei, 181 Vanuatu, 182 Cambodia, 183 Chad

Velkom back Juergen!



The European championship finals in England will be something of a home from home occasion for German captain Juergen Klinsmann.

Throughout this season he has been in the unusual position of being England's Footballer of the Year while playing for Bayern Munich in the Bundesliga.

The impression he made during his year in England with Tottenham has not been forgotten.

Before Klinsmann joined Spurs after the 1994 World Cup finals, it is fair to say he was not the most popular player in the eyes of English soccer fans.

He had the reputation of being a "diver" in the penalty box.

But he quickly won over not only Spurs fans but also those of other clubs throughout the country who openly applauded his outstanding skill and, more importantly, his sportsmanship.

It is rare indeed for rival fans to have a good word to say about players not playing for their team, but Klinsmann managed to accomplish that.

He made fans laugh by celebrating his first goals for Spurs with exaggerated celebratory swallow dives, his team mates following suit.

Here was a man with a sense of humour. He had pulled off a publicity masterstroke.

Since leaving Tottenham to return to Germany at the end of last season he has played in Britain several times with Germany and Bayern and been given a rousing reception by supporters.

Klinsmann is now regarded with obvious affection by the English and hopes that both his links with

England and Germany's links with the city of Manchester will help their cause.

"I hope we can look at Manchester as home matches, especially since England are playing in London," Klinsmann said.

"People in Manchester remember Bert Trautmann there and now Eike Immel, Uwe Roesler and Michael Frontzeck play in England with Manchester City."

"I don't think I'm forgotten yet either. There should be enough support for us."

Klinsmann, who has taken over as captain of the team from the injured Lothar Matthaeus, was a vital part of Germany's qualifying campaign, scoring nine goals.

His fortune at Euro 96 should contrast sharply with the 1992 competition — even though he will miss Germany's first Group C match against the Czech Republic because of suspension.

In 1992 the blond-haired striker struggled to get into the team after a loss of form following his brilliant 1990 World Cup. He came into the first-choice line-up only after veteran forward Rudi Voeller broke his arm in the opening match.

"I was going through a difficult period during the 1992 championships," Klinsmann said.

"Voeller's bad luck turned out to be my good fortune. Also (coach) Berti Vogts stood by me ... I am thankful for that."

One thing is certain. Klinsmann, who speaks fluent English, will be under considerable pressure on and off the pitch.

The German camp is notorious for controversy during big tournaments and Klinsmann will be much in demand from the media.



Lothar Matthaeus: "It's a good decision for both myself and Berti Vogts."

122 CAPS ENOUGH

Germany's most capped player Lothar Matthaeus announced his retirement from internationals after nearly 16 years last week.

The 35-year-old player, who has struggled with injury in the last two seasons, confirmed reports that he no longer wanted national team coach Berti Vogts to consider him for selection.

"I've had a good time with the national team. I am happy that I have come to a decision," the Bayern Munich player said. "It's a good decision for both myself and Berti Vogts."

Both German television and the magazine Sport Bild had earlier reported the retirement of the libero-cum-midfielder. Matthaeus confirmed the stories after Bayern's 3-2 defeat by Werder Bremen in a Bundesliga evening game.

Matthaeus won 122 caps — 19 more than the legendary Franz Beckenbauer — and captained the Germans when they won the World Cup in 1990. He also led the team at the 1994 finals.

He last played for Germany in December 1994 before tearing an Achilles tendon which has hampered his game.



Juergen Klinsmann: Returns to England next month.

ESPAÑOL QUALIFY

Spanish league side Espanyol qualified for next season's UEFA Cup last Wednesday by beating Oviedo 5-0.

Espanyol, which was the early season pacesetter in the championship, last appeared in European competition in 1988.

It reached the UEFA Cup semi-finals, coached by present Spanish boss Javier Clemente, losing to Bayer Leverkusen.

CHINA SIGNED FRENCH

Two French footballers have signed one year contracts to play with China's leading team, a Shanghai newspaper has reported.

The Xinmin Evening News reported that Clement Garcia, who plays in the French league for Gueugnon, and Jose Bray, who is with Lille, became the first French players to join a Chinese team when they signed with Shanghai Shenhua Football Club.

The players, who arrived in Shanghai two weeks ago, and the Shanghai club both declined to disclose contract details, the report said. Shenhua, which also has three Russian players on its roster, is to meet Italy's AC Milan here for a May 28 exhibition match.

WORLD RESULTS & TABLES

NORWAY FIRST DIVISION
— May 6 —

Lillestrom	0	Viking	4
Skeid	1	Tromsøe	0
Stroemsgodset	1	Molde	3
Kongsvinger	2	Bodøe/Glimt	1
Rosenborg	10	Brann	0
Moss	2	Vaalerenga	2
Start	1	Stabaek	2
TABLE			
Rosenborg	4	4	0
Lillestrom	5	3	1
Viking	5	2	3
Skeid	5	3	0
Bodøe/Glimt	5	2	1
Tromsøe	4	2	1
Molde	5	2	0
Stabaek	4	1	2
Stroemsgodset	5	1	2
Brann	4	1	2
Start	4	1	1
Kongsvinger	4	1	1
Moss	5	0	2
Vaalerenga	5	0	1

CHINA DIVISION A
— May 6 —

Chinese Army	1	Sichuan Quanxing	1
Guangdong Hongyuan	2	Shandong Jinan	1
Beijing Guo'an	4	Tianjin Samsung	0
Guangdong Songri	4	Guangzhou Apollo	1
Dalian Wanda	1	Yanbian Hyundai	1
Shanghai Shenhua	2	Shenzhen	0
TABLE			
Dalian Wanda	4	4	0
Shanghai Shenhua	4	3	1
Guangzhou Apollo	4	2	2
Beijing Guo'an	4	2	1
Chinese Army	4	1	3
Guangdong Hongyuan	4	1	2
Yanbian Hyundai	4	0	3
Sichuan Quanxing	4	0	3
Shandong Taishan	4	0	2
Shenzhen	4	0	2
Guangzhou Songri	4	0	2
Tianjin Samsung	4	0	1

CZECH REPUBLIC
— May 6 —

Slovan Liberec	4	Petra Drnovice	0
Viktoria Zizkov	2	Viktoria Plzen	0
Kaucuk Opava	3	SK C.Budejovice	1
Union Cheb	2	FK Jablonec	0
Svit Zlin	2	Joko Uherse Hradiste	0
Slavia Praha	2	SK Hradec Kralove	1
Sigma Olomouc	1	Banik Ostrava	0
Roby Brno	1	Sparta Praha	0
TABLE			
Slavia Praha	28	21	1
Sigma Olomouc	28	17	4
FK Jablonec	28	15	5
Petra Drnovice	28	14	6
Sparta Praha	28	13	7
Slovan Liberec	27	11	7
Kaucuk Opava	28	11	7
Boby Brno	27	10	7
Viktoria Plzen	27	10	6
Viktoria Zizkov	28	9	8
SK C.Budejovice	28	10	5
Bank Ostrava	27	9	5
Union Cheb	28	8	8
SK Hradec Kralove	28	8	4
Svit Zlin	28	5	9
J Uherse Hradiste	28	3	7

CYPRUS LEAGUE
— May 6 —

Omonia	1	APOEL	1
Anorthosis	4	Aris	2
AEL	5	Evagoras	1
Olympiakos	2	Apollon	2
AEK	3	Paralimni	0
Aradippou	0	Salamina	3
Ethnikos	1	Alki	1
TABLE			
APOEL Nicosia	24	17	7
AEK Larnaca	24	15	5
Omonia Nicosia	24	15	5
Anorthosis Famagusta	24	14	7
Apollon Limassol	24	9	10

CYPRUS LEAGUE
— May 6 —

Salamina Famagusta	24	10	3	11	35	40	33
Paralimni	24	8	8	8	35	35	32
Alki Larnaca	24	8	7	9	40	41	31
Ethnikos Achna	24	7	10	7	29	32	31
Aris Limassol	24	5	10	9	31	35	25
Olympiakos Nicosia	24	6	6	12	20	32	24
AEL Limassol	24	6	5	13	35	46	23
Evagoras Paphos	24	2	7	15	20	55	13
Omonia Aradippou	24	0	2	22	18	79	2

Note: APOEL has won for the 16th time with two games left.

TURKEY FIRST DIVISION
— May 5 —

Ataspor	1	Bursaspor	3
Galatasaray	0	Kocaelispor	4
Trabzonspor	1	Fenerbahce	2
Antalyaspor	1	Eskişehirspor	0
Vanspor	0	Istanbulspor	0
Kayserispor	1	Gaziantepspor	2
Genclerbirliği	1	Ankaragucu	2
Samsunspor	4	Karsiyaka	1
Besiktas	0	Denizlispor	4

TABLE

Fenerbahce	32	24	6	2	63	19	78
Trabzonspor	32	24	4	4	68	22	76
Besiktas	32	22	3	7	73	41	69
Galatasaray	32	19	5	8	64	37	62
Kocaelispor	32	16	10	6	60	41	58
Antalyaspor	32	13	6	13	44	52	45
Gaziantepspor	32	12	7	13	39	43	43
Bursaspor	32	10	11	11	54	44	41
Samsunspor	32	11	7	14	44	42	40
Genclerbirliği	32	9	11	12	39	45	38
Istanbulspor	32	8	11	13	46	51	35
Vanspor	32	8	10	14	32	47	34
Ankaragucu	32	9	7	16	33	53	34
Denizlispor	32	8	9	15	38	49	33
Altay	32	8	8	16	31	55	32
Eskişehirspor	32	9	2	21	36	61	29
Kayserispor	32	5	11	16	38	60	26
Karsiyaka	32	6	6	20	21	61	24

HUNGARY FIRST DIVISION
— May 5 —

Vasas Casino Vigado	1	BVSC-Dreher	0
Gyori ETO EFC	2	Ferencvarosi TC	5
Bekescsabai EFC	2	DVSC Epona	2
Csepel SC	1	Stadler FC	0
Vac FC-Samsung	2	Zalaegerszeg TE	1
Fehervar '96 FC	2	Lipesti TE	2
Haladas VFC	0	Pecs MFC	1
Kispest-Honved FC	2	MTK FC	1
TABLE			
BVSC-Dreher	23	15	6
Ferencvarosi	23	16	2
Kispest-Honved FC	23		

WORLD RESULTS & TABLES

Attendance: 4,000
 Third place playoff
 Greece 2 Israel 3

RUSSIAN CUP FINAL

— May 11 —

Lokomotiv Moscow 3 Spartak Moscow 2
 (halftime 2-2)
 Scorers:
 Lokomotiv — Kosolapov (10, 43, both penalties),
 Dzordov (85)
 Spartak — Lipko (22), Nikiforov (30, penalty)
 Attendance: 20,000

SWISS FIRST DIVISION

— May 11 —

AC 0 Grasshopper 0
 Servette 3 Lucerne 4
 Neuchatel 1 Basle 1
 Sion 3 St Gallen 1

TABLE

Grasshopper	13	8	5	0	23	4	51
Sion	13	7	2	4	17	12	44
Neuchatel	13	5	6	2	18	13	42
Aarau	13	6	4	3	19	15	36
Lucerne	13	4	3	6	21	16	35
Basle	13	2	4	7	9	20	25
Servette	13	2	5	6	18	23	25
St Gallen	13	2	3	8	8	30	23

FRENCH FIRST DIVISION

— May 11 —

Guingamp	1	Auxerre	1
Nantes	1	Metz	0
Bordeaux	2	Paris St Germain	2
Montpellier	5	Strasbourg	1
Cannes	5	Lens	1
Montpellier	2	Le Havre	0
Gueugnon	1	Rennes	0
Lille	2	Lyon	1
BVastia	1	Nice	2
St Etienne	2	Martigues	2

TABLE

Auxerre	37	21	6	10	64	29	69
Paris St Germain	37	18	11	8	60	35	65
Monaco	37	18	11	8	61	37	65
Metz	37	18	11	8	41	28	65
Lens	37	16	14	7	43	30	62
Montpellier	37	17	9	11	51	39	60
Nantes	37	14	13	10	43	40	55
Rennes	37	13	15	9	42	38	54
Guingamp	37	13	14	10	33	31	53
Strasbourg	37	13	12	12	45	44	51
Lyon	37	9	18	10	39	42	45
Cannes	37	12	8	17	45	49	44
Bastia	37	12	8	17	44	50	44
Le Havre	37	11	11	15	32	44	44
Nice	37	11	9	17	35	44	42
Bordeaux	37	10	9	18	42	52	39
Lille	37	9	12	16	27	48	39
Gueugnon	37	7	14	16	25	45	35
St Etienne	37	6	16	15	36	57	34
Martigues	37	8	7	22	28	58	31

YUGOSLAV LEAGUE

— May 11 —

Division A			
Becej	1	Sloboda	0
Rad	3	Radnicki (N)	1
Mladost (L)	3	Red Star	2
Proleter	5	Cukaricki	3
Partizan	6	Vojvodina	3

TABLE

Partizan	17	12	3	2	47	16	57
Red Star	17	8	5	4	24	15	45
Becej	17	9	6	2	18	14	41
Vojvodina	17	7	6	4	28	19	40
Mladost (L)	17	8	2	7	24	25	32
Rad	17	5	5	7	20	20	28
Proleter	17	6	3	8	23	25	27
Cukaricki	17	3	6	8	20	22	28
Radnicki (N)	17	4	5	8	18	33	26
Sloboda	17	1	3	13	8	41	11

Division B

Borac	2	Buducnost	0
Napredak	5	Hajduk	2
OFK Beograd	3	Mladost (BJ)	0
Obilic	0	Loznica	0

TABLE

Borac	16	10	2	4	24	11	34
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Zemun 15 8 3 4 22 11 34
 Hajduk 16 8 3 5 20 18 33
 Buducnost 16 7 4 5 14 14 28
 OFK Beograd 16 7 2 7 22 22 27
 Obilic 16 6 2 8 17 18 25
 Napredak 16 6 3 7 21 22 24
 Mladost (BJ) 16 6 1 9 15 23 23
 Loznica 16 6 3 7 20 20 23
 Radnicki (B) 15 2 3 10 12 28 16

NOTE: Teams in Division A and B began the spring season with bonus points awarded at the end of the autumn season of the 1995-96 championship

GERMAN FIRST DIVISION

— May 11 —

Freiburg	2	Bayer Leverkusen	1
Cologne	1	Werder Bremen	2
Schalke	2	Bayern Munich	1
F Duesseldorf	2	E Frankfurt	2
Hamburg	3	VfB Stuttgart	0
Karlsruhe	2	St Pauli	2
Uerdingen	0	B Moenchengladbach	2
1860 Munich	2	Borussia Dortmund	2
Kaiserslautern	2	Hansa Rostock	0

TABLE

Borussia Dortmund	33	18	11	4	73	36	65
Bayern Munich	33	19	4	10	64	44	61
Schalke	33	13	14	6	43	35	53
B Moenchengladbach	33	15	8	10	52	49	53
Hansa Rostock	33	13	10	10	47	42	49
Karlsruhe	33	12	12	9	52	44	48
Hamburg	33	11	14	8	48	46	47
Uerdingen	33	10	14	9	38	40	44
1860 Munich	33	10	12	11	50	46	42
Freiburg	33	11	9	13	28	38	42
VfB Stuttgart	33	9	13	11	56	61	40
F Duesseldorf	33	8	15	10	38	45	39
St Pauli	33	9	11	13	43	49	38
Bayern Leverkusen	33	8	13	12	36	37	37
Cologne	33	8	13	12	32	35	37
Kaiserslautern	33	6	17	10	30	36	35
E Frankfurt	33	7	11	15	42	64	32
Uerdingen	33	4	11	18	31	56	23

ENGLISH LEAGUE PLAY-OFF SEMI-FINAL

— May 12 —

Charlton	1	Crystal Palace	2
Leicester	0	Stoke	0

DIVISION TWO

Bradford	0	Blackpool	2
Crewe	2	Notts County	2

DIVISION THREE

Colchester	1	Plymouth	0
Hereford	1	Darlington	2

SCOTTISH LEAGUE PLAY-OFF	— May 12 —		
Partick	1	Dundee United	1

CROATIAN PREMIER DIVISION	— May 12 —		
Hajduk	1	Varteks	0
Zagreb	1	Croatia	3
H.Dragovljac	2	Osijek	1

TABLE

Croatia	10	7	0	3	28	14	26
Hajduk	10	7	1	2	25	14	26
Varteks	10	7	1	2	15	7	24
Osijek	10	4	0	6	18	13	15
H.Dragovljac	10	1	3	6	8	23	7
Zagreb	10	1	1	8	7	25	5

GREEK FIRST DIVISION

— May 12 —

Apollon	0	PAOK	1
Aris	3	Paniliakos	1
Ethnikos	3	Athinaikos	2

Irkaklis	2	Panathinaikos	1
Kalamata	0	Panathinaikos	1
OFI	2	Olympiakos	1

Panathinaikos	31	24	5	2	65	18	77
AEK	31	23	5	3	78	20	74
Olympiakos	31	18	7	6	61	30	61
OFI	31	15	6	10	54	48	51
Irkaklis	31	14	7	10	45		

SOUTH AMERICA

— COMPILED BY MARIO ECHART —

Libertadores Cup SECOND ROUND

In Montevideo: Penarol (Uruguay) 1 San Lorenzo (Argentina) 5 (halftime 0-2)
Scorers:
 Penarol - Antonio Pacheco (53 minute)
 San Lorenzo - Silas (19), Roberto Montserrat (28 and 89), Claudio Biaggio (67), Javier Arbarello (85)
 Attendance: 50,000
 San Lorenzo win 8-3 on aggregate
In Buenos Aires: River Plate (Argentina) 5 Sporting Cristal (Peru) 2 (4-0)
Scorers:
 River Plate - Hernan Crespo (5 and 30), Enzo Francescoli (22), Ariel Ortega (33), Gabriel Cedres (70)
 Sporting Cristal - Roberto Solano (47, penalty), Julinho (55)
 Attendance: 50,000
 River Plate win 6-4 on aggregate
In Porto Alegre: Gremio (Brazil) 2 Botafogo (Brazil) 0 (1-0)

Scorers: Luciano (5), Carlos Miguel (56)
 Attendance: 31,000
 Gremio win 3-1 on aggregate
In Sao Paulo: Corinthians (Brazil) 2 Espoli (Ecuador) 0 (1-0)
Scorers: Marcelinho Carioca (25), Tupazinho (72)
 Attendance: 21,000
 Corinthians win 5-1 on aggregate
In Guayaquil, Ecuador: Barcelona (Ecuador) 2 San Jose (Bolivia) 1 (0-0)
Scorers:
 Barcelona - Gilson de Souza (66th), Byron Tenorio (88th)
 San Jose - Orlando Rivera (83rd)
 Attendance: 35,000
 Aggregate score 2-2. Barcelona win 4-2 on penalties.
In Cali, Colombia: America (Colombia) 4 Minerven (Venezuela) 1 (1-0)
Scorers:

America - Anthony de Avila (5, 60 and 73), Zambrano (54)
 Minerven - Rodallegas (87)
 Attendance: 15,000
 America win 5-2 on aggregate
In Barranquilla, Colombia: Junior (Colombia) 1 Cerro Porteno (Paraguay) 0 (1-0)
Scorer: Ivan Valenciano (36th minute)
 Attendance: 12,000
 Junior win 1-0 on aggregate
In Montevideo: Defensor Sporting (Uruguay) 2 Universidad de Chile (Chile) 1 (1-1)
Scorers:
 Defensor Sporting - Sebastian Abreu (17 minute) — penalty, 47.
 Universidad de Chile - Leonardo Rodriguez (28 — penalty).
 Attendance: 10,000
 Aggregate score 4-4. Universidad de Chile win 7-6 on penalties.

SAN LORENZO

THROUGH

San Lorenzo and River Plate from Argentina, 1995 Libertadores Cup champions Gremio and Corinthians, both from Brazil, Colombians Junior and America, Barcelona of Ecuador and Universidad of Chile, all qualify for the quarter finals of the major South American championship at club level.

San Lorenzo caused the big surprise, thrashing Uruguayan champion, Penarol, 5-1 at Montevideo's historic Centenario Stadium. San Lorenzo won the first leg 3-

The Argentines were in control for most of the match and outclassed the former five times Libertadores cup champion in front of 25,000 fans.

Striker Claudio Biaggio in the 20th and 65th, midfielder Roberto Monserrat in the 28th and 89th, and Javier Arbarello scored for San Lorenzo while Antonio Pacheco pulled one back for Penarol in the 51st.

PENAROL: Navarro, Aguirregaray, Oleira, Tais (67th Aguilera), Lima, Bengoechea, De Los Santos, Baltierra, Romero, Pacheco, Magallanes (46th Sosa).

Coach: Jorge Fosati.

SAN LORENZO: Passet, Arevalo, Ruggeri, Manusovich, Escudero,

Rivadado, Galetto, Monserrat, Arbarello, Biaggio, Silas (85th Quinteros). Coach: Hector Veira.

Argentina fans attacked

A confrontation between fans of Penarol and Argentine club San Lorenzo at the end of their Copa Libertadores match in Uruguay last week ended with dozens injured, one apparently with a gunshot wound, police said.

Witnesses said that at the end of the match, Penarol fans moved toward the stands occupied by San Lorenzo supporters, evading a security cordon set up to prevent disturbances.

They attacked the Argentine club's fans with sticks and stones. Shots were also heard, but witnesses could not pinpoint where they came from.

Police said one person was hospitalised with serious injuries, while in the San Lorenzo dressing room the club doctor offered first aid to a youth apparently shot in the hand.

Police dispersed the fans, but trouble flared again in the bus terminal where some Argentine fans were gathering to return to Buenos Aires.

Police finally quelled the disturbances, authorities said.

San Lorenzo won the

match 5-1 and advanced to the quarter-finals of the South American club championship.

UNIVERSIDAD OF CHILE QUALIFIED

Defensor Sporting of Uruguay defeated Universidad of Chile, 2-1 in Montevideo, but was eliminated by the Chileans in the penalty shoot out.

Universidad beat Defensor Sporting, 3-2, in Santiago, and the game in Montevideo had to go to penalties.

During the 90 minutes, Sebastian Abeu in the 17th minute through a penalty and in the 47th netted for the Uruguayans, while Argentine midfielder Leo Rodriguez scored for Universidad, in the 28th.

Goalkeeper Sergio Bernabe Vargas was Universidad's hero saving the last penalty from Uruguayan striker Dos Santos.

River Plate & Gremio also qualified

River Plate of Argentina with goals from Hernan Crespo in the fifth and 30th minute, Enzo Francescoli in the 22nd, Ariel Ortega in the 33rd and Gabriel Cedres in the 70th defeated Sporting Cristal of Peru, 5-2.

The Peruvian goals were scored by Roberto Solano

through a penalty in the 47th and Julinho in the 55th.

Libertadores Cup title holder, Gremio of Brazil defeated compatriots, Botafogo 2-0, in Porto Alegre, to advance to the quarter finals with a aggregate of 3-1.

Luciano in the fifth minute and Carlos Miguel in the 56th scored for the champions.

Barcelona of Ecuador defeated Bolivian champion, San Jose, 2-0, in Guayaquil, but the game went to a penalty shoot out because San Jose won the first leg for similar scoreline.

The Ecuadoreans finally beat the Bolivians 4-2 on penalties.

Colombians America of Cali and Junior of Barranquilla also qualified after their respective victories over Minerven of Venezuela and Cerro Porteno for Paraguay.

America defeated Minerven 4-1, with a hat-trick from Anthony De Avila and the other goal from Zambrano, while Junior advanced to the quarter finals thanks to a goal from Colombian international striker Ivan Valenciano.

Corinthians beat Espoli

Corinthians of Brazil defeated Espoli of Ecuador, 2-0 at Sao Paulo's Pacaembu Stadium, in front of 22,000 spectators, and qualified to

the quarter finals.

The Brazilians dominated through the whole game without much trouble against a dispirited Ecuadorean side overcome by the occasion.

Midfielder Marcelinho Carioca opened the account in the 30th minute with a well executed free kick from 35 metres, and striker Tupazinho added the second in the 73rd after an Ecuadorean defensive blunder.

Espoli's midfielder Diaz, was sent off by Paraguayan referee Ubaldo Aquino in the 30th minute.

CORINTHIANS: Ronaldo, Andre Santos, Alexandre, Henrique (Cris), Silvinho, Ze Elias, Bernardo, Marcelinho Carioca, Souza, Edmundo, Leonardo (Tupazinho).

ESPOLI: Buele, Rivera, Ballesteros, Valencia, Pazimino, Obregon, Diaz, Dominguez, Yepes, Carabali, Jauch.

Coach: Fernando Dominguez.

QUARTER FINALS

The Libertadores Cup quarter finals will commence tomorrow, Wednesday with the games between River Plate and San Lorenzo, both from Argentina. America and Junior, both from Colombia.

Corinthians and Gremio, both from Brazil, and Universidad de Chile v Barcelona of Ecuador.

Paulo championship.

The defeat ended a run of 30 games — 23 in the Sao Paulo championship, four in the Copa Brasil and three friendlies — without losing.

Flamengo officials complained that the team bench had been pelted with stones and batteries during the game.

Internacional full-back Cesar Prates had been dismissed in the 20th minute for a vicious challenge on Gilberto in the Sao

Palmeiras, who won the first stage of the tournament, still lead the second stage, two points ahead of Aracatuba.

WORLD CUP South American Tournament

The South American qualifying tournament for France '98 will continue on June 2, when Ecuador hosts Argentina in Quito, Uruguay plays Paraguay in Montevideo.

Chile makes its debut against Venezuela in Caracas and Peru face Colombia in Lima. The return matches will be played on April 30, 1997.

Argentina, after a powerful start against Bolivia emerged as the favourite to win the South American qualifier, while Copa America champions Uruguay who beat Venezuela, 2-0 away, Colombia and Bolivia could also qualify for the World Cup.

Uruguayan coach, Hector Nunez, may recall midfielder Diego Martin Dorta, who plays for Argentine club Independiente, for the match against the Paraguayans.

Dorta just recovered from an injury that sidelined him for several months.



Hector Nunez: Recalls midfielder Dorta.

The complete South American qualifiers calendar is the following:

3RD ROUND, JULY 7, 1996

Lima: Peru v Argentina
 Santiago: Chile v Ecuador
 Barranquilla: Colombia v Uruguay
 La Paz: Bolivia v Venezuela

Return matches on June 8, 1997

4TH ROUND, SEPTEMBER 1, 1996

Buenos Aires: Argentina v Paraguay
 Barranquilla: Colombia v Chile
 Quito: Ecuador v Venezuela
 La Paz: Bolivia v Peru

Return matches on July 6, 1997

5TH ROUND, OCTOBER 9, 1996

Caracas: Venezuela v Argentina
 Montevideo: Uruguay v Bolivia
 Quito: Ecuador v Colombia
 Asuncion: Paraguay v Chile

Return matches on July 20, 1997

6TH ROUND, NOVEMBER 10, 1996

Santiago: Chile v Uruguay
 La Paz: Bolivia v Colombia
 Asuncion: Paraguay v Ecuador
 Lima: Peru v Venezuela

Return matches on August 20, 1997

7TH ROUND, DECEMBER 15, 1996

Buenos Aires: Argentina v Chile
 Montevideo: Uruguay v Peru
 Caracas: Venezuela v Colombia
 La Paz: Bolivia v Paraguay

Return matches September 10, 1997

8TH ROUND, JANUARY 12, 1997

Montevideo: Uruguay v Argentina
 Lima: Peru v Chile
 Caracas: Venezuela v Paraguay
 La Paz: Bolivia v Ecuador

Return matches on October 12, 1997

9TH ROUND, FEBRUARY 12, 1997

Barranquilla: Colombia v Argentina
 Quito: Ecuador v Uruguay
 Asuncion: Paraguay v Peru
 La Paz: Bolivia v Chile

Flamengo coach red-carded

Flamengo coach Joel Santana launched a furious outburst, heard by millions of television viewers, as his team lost for the first time this year.

Flamengo were beaten 3-2 away by Internacional in a stormy Copa Brasil quarter-final first leg match in which three players and Santa were shown the red card.

"They can't do this to Flamengo," Santana yelled at touchline reporters during the second half in an outburst lasting over a minute in which he lambasted the referee.

"This is a joke, how can they allow someone like this to referee a match like this?"

Flamengo defender Jorge Luis was sent off

just before half-time for dissent and midfielder Djair followed him in the second half for a second bookable offence. Santana was shown the red card for persistent complaining.

Internacional full-back Cesar Prates had been dismissed in the 20th minute for a vicious challenge on Gilberto in the Sao

Palmeiras, who won the first stage of the tournament, still lead the second stage, two points ahead of Aracatuba.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

CHAMPAGNE FOR AUXERRE

Modest Auxerre secured its first league title in style last Saturday by drawing 1-1 at Guingamp to become the first French team to win the Cup and league double since Marseille in 1989.



Auxerre captain Corentin Martins.

Just a week ago the club from a small town in Burgundy beat Nîmes 2-1 in the Cup final.

Auxerre made a perfect start, scoring after 11 minutes with a powerful shot from close range by Bernard Diomède.

It then controlled the match until the 80th minute, when George Mihali equalised for Guingamp.

Metz and Paris St Germain, both still in

DORTMUND CHAMPIONS!

Borussia Dortmund became the first team in six years to retain the Bundesliga champion last Saturday by snatching a draw while rival Bayern Munich was eliminated on a last-minute goal.

Midfielder Andreas Müller's 90th-minute header stunned Bayern, lifting UEFA Cup-bound Schalke to a 2-1 win and ending the 13-time league champion's flickering title hopes.

Dortmund held on to draw 2-2 against 1860 Munich, surviving two late goals by Olaf Bodden, and moved four points clear of Bayern with one match to play.

"I'm super-happy," said Dortmund coach Ottmar Hitzfeld. "The whole impact will sink in when I've had two or three days to unwind."

The title was the fifth in Dortmund's history, following championships in 1956, 1957, 1963 and 1995.

Borussia Moenchengladbach also secured a berth in the UEFA Cup,

beating KFC Uerdingen 2-0, while Eintracht Frankfurt was relegated with a 2-2 draw against Fortuna Düsseldorf.

Frankfurt, one of the Bundesliga's founding members, dropped to the second division for the first time in the club's history.

Bayern Munich, the last team to retain the Bundesliga championship in 1990, effectively handed Dortmund the title last Saturday when it fell to Werder Bremen 3-2 after blowing a 2-0 lead.

Goals by team captain Michael Zorc and Stefan Reuter paced Dortmund to a commanding lead against 1860 Bayern before it struggled to hang on after Bodden fired goals in the 68th and 81st minutes.

Müller's goal came after a lacklustre performance by Munich, whose coach, Franz Beckenbauer had already conceded Dortmund the title.

Olaf Thom's 25-metre rocket gave Schalke a go-ahead goal in the 36th

minute, before German national team player Thomas Strunz evened the match shortly before the half.

In other matches, SC Freiburg edged Bayer

Leverkusen 2-1, Werder Bremen beat FC Cologne 2-1, Hamburger SV blanked VfB Stuttgart 3-0, Kaiserslautern beat Hansa Rostock 2-0.



Stefan Reuter: Scored for the champions.

contention going into the penultimate day of the season, needed to do better than Auxerre to keep their chances alive.

But they both saw their title hopes crushed, leaving Auxerre to celebrate before its home fans against Nantes in the league's final program.

Outgoing champion Nantes showed glimpses of its form of last season to beat Metz 1-0 with Frederic Da Rocha scoring in the fourth minute to kill off the challenge of the eastern clubs.

Paris St Germain, which has been busy celebrating

since winning the European Cup Winners' Cup on Wednesday, knew the championship was practically out of its reach before travelling to Bordeaux, where it was held to a 2-2 draw.

Auxerre, which had never won anything until its

victory in the 1994 Cup final, topped the 20-strong table with 69 points compared to 65 for PSG, Monaco and Metz.

"It is fair that those who have been working hard for a long time one day obtain a reward," said Auxerre trainer Guy Roux, who has



The former Yugoslav republics, currently playing in Spain.

The country is also traditionally a favourite destination for South Americans, several of whom have asked for Spanish nationality after the Bosman ruling.

MACCABI'S CHAMPIONSHIP

Defending champion Maccabi Tel Aviv clinched its 17th Israeli league championship when it beat Betar Jerusalém 1-0 in the penultimate round last Saturday.

The Tel Aviv club holds an unassailable six-point lead over its nearest rival Maccabi Haifa.

KOREA CONFIDENT

A senior South Korean official of FIFA said last week he is convinced his country will win the right to host the 2002 World Cup finals.

Under the scheme, teams will be permitted three non-EU players on the field at any one time next season, but this will be progressively reduced to two the following year and one in the 1998-99 season.

The Spanish Football Federation, the Professional football League and the Association of Footballers have agreed to present the idea for approval to their members in the near future.

There are numerous players from former eastern block countries, especially

NON-PLAYERS REDUCED

Spanish authorities plan to reduce the number of non-European Union players allowed in teams in the wake of the Bosman ruling which outlaws restrictions on EU players.

Under the scheme, teams will be permitted three non-EU players on the field at any one time next season, but this will be progressively reduced to two the following year and one in the 1998-99 season.

The Spanish Football Federation, the Professional football League and the Association of Footballers have agreed to present the idea for approval to their members in the near future.

South Korea and Japan are bidding for the right to host the first World Cup finals in Asia.

Croatian Corner

By John Viskovich

CROATIANS ABROAD

Mladen Mladenovic after only eight full appearances for Japanese side Gamba Osaka has scored eight goals making the midfielder a big success since his arrival from Austria.

Ivica Vastic "The Austrian Player of the Year" has also made his mark on the goalscorers chart by topping it with 16 goals. The Torino bound midfielder is now clearly the best player in Austria.

Mario Stanic now a regular with Croatia is on fire. Not only has his club FC Brugge won the title but he is also Belgium's top goalscorer with 20 and still counting.

have been very memorable.

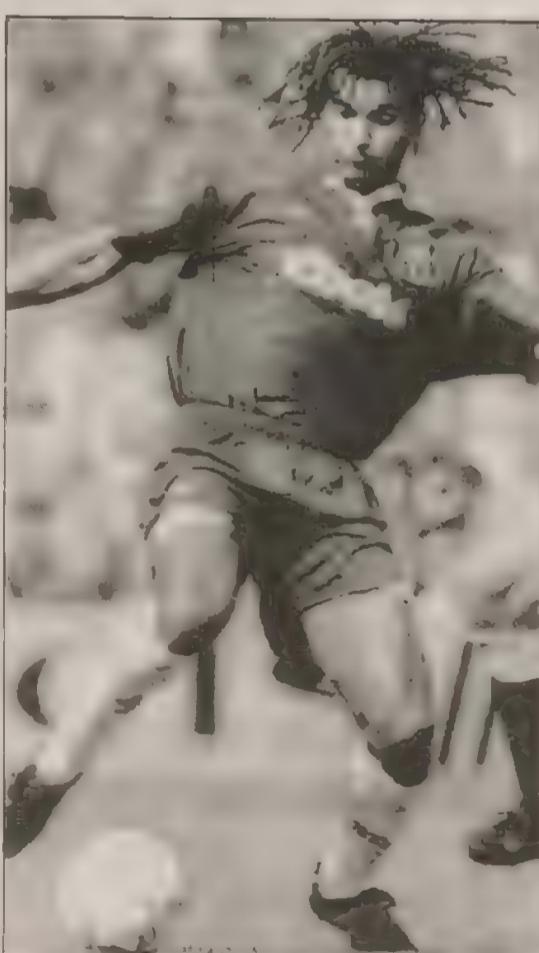
As his coach says "Viduka scores when it's most needed and he did that early on in the season when his goal beat Hajduk Split 1-0".

Although Viduka has impressed everyone he might find it hard to catch top goalscorer so far Osijek's Igor Pamic who is on 17. Pamic is closely followed by Davor Vugrinec (Vartex) on 16, Nenad Pralida (Hajduk) on 15, Irog Cvitanovic (C. Zagreb) on 14 while Viduka follows them.

FACT FILE

In 1992 Croatia set up a separate soccer organisation to Yugoslavia. Since then more 1,500 players have left for clubs abroad while about 660 have arrived.

For more Croatian Sports News and a good laugh, in English, tune into "CRO 2000" on Sydney radio 98.5 FM on Wednesday at 8.50pm with Ante Grabovac.



Ruud Gullit: Takes over from Glenn Hoddle at Stamford Bridge.

Chelsea has appointed Dutch midfielder Ruud Gullit as the Premier League club's new player-manager in succession to Glenn Hoddle.

Gullit's playing contract will be extended to June 1998 and he is set to become one of England's first Continental-style coaches.

The following is a brief factfile on Chelsea's new player-manager Ruud Gullit:

1962: Born Amsterdam.

1978: Signed for Dutch club Harlem.

1981: Made international debut for the Netherlands against Switzerland on 19th birthday.

1982: Moved to Feyenoord.

1985: Transferred to PSV Eindhoven for \$A764,500.

1987: Signed by AC Milan for world record \$A10.51 million. Voted European and world Footballer of the Year.

1988: Helped Milan to Italian league title. Captained Netherlands to European title. Suffered serious knee injury.

1989: Won the first of two European Cup medals with Milan.

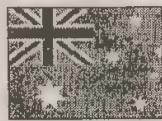
1993: Won third Italian league winners' medal with Milan before joining Sampdoria.

1994: Made international comeback against Scotland but walked out after another argument with manager with the World Cup less than three weeks away. In all, made 66 appearances for the Netherlands, scoring 16 goals. Moved back to Milan for seven months before returning to Sampdoria.

1995: Signed two-year contract with Chelsea, leaving Sampdoria on a free transfer.

1996: Named as Chelsea's player-manager in succession to Glenn Hoddle.

UK SOCCER SUPPORTERS DOWNUNDER



Without a shadow of a doubt, and with no disrespect to Heart of Midlothian supporters, they will certainly enter the game as very much the under-dogs. In fact, you could liken the task ahead of pushing soup uphill with your nose (anyone who knows that phrase will see that it's been cleaned up somewhat here?)

Anything could happen on the big day of course and Rangers have not beaten them this year, although they have met four times in the league this term, points are all square with both sides having won two games apiece.

Perhaps, a big perhaps admittedly, Hearts have the dreaded "Indian sign" over their Glasgow rivals at this point in time but in all honesty, apart from their own Edinburgh supporters and the lads who follow Celtic (more in hope than honest judgement), no-one really expects them to lift the trophy, everyone fully predicting that it's another "double year" for the giants of the Scottish scene, at least

so far as the last 7-8 years go anyway.

I think you'll even find that the Hibernian supporters, Fred Leggett included, will become "honorary Gers" for the night rather than see their greatest rivals wander back to the "granite city" with the silverware. All that aside though, how do the statistics shape up:

The two sides have met in this competition, at various stages, some 21 times since 1899 with Rangers winning ALL but four of the encounters!

It's the third time they will have met in the final, Rangers winning both with a 2-0 win after a 0-0 draw in 1903 and a 3-1 win in 1976. Could it be third time lucky for "the Jam Tarts" this time?

Whereas Rangers have played in the final 43 times previously, winning 26, losing 16 and drawing 11 (after a 2-2 with Celtic in 1909, the cup was withheld and the record expunged from the books. This will in fact be their 44th final since

the inception of the cup in 1873.

Hearts are, not surprisingly, some way behind one half of "the old firm", having played in a mere 10 finals before. Of course, saying a mere 10 sounds insulting but when considering the records of their counterparts, that really just about sums it up I'm afraid. It's obviously a similar story with all the other records too:

Semi-final apps: Rangers 53 to Hearts 28

Champions: Rangers 47 to Heart 4

Runners-up: Rangers 23 to Hearts 13 League Cup Wins: Rangers 19 to Hearts 3

Lge Cup losses: Rangers 5 to Hearts 1

This is not meant to be - little the magnificent achievement of Hearts actually reaching the final but it does show what sort of a gap exists between the two sides and just how big a shock it would be if they won the cup ... not forgetting that anything can, and does, happen in big one-off games. They will be hoping to have brought their "scoring boots" as they did in the second round in 1937 when they walloped Kings Park 15-0 to record their biggest cup win. Not much chance of that happening in this match.

The man with most of the weight on his shoulders to provide a goal for the Edinburgh side will be Alan Johnston. He has been responsible for scoring four against Rangers in their last two league matches (to which Rangers did not reply).

His partner on the day is likely to be John Robertson, who had a short stay with Newcastle United before returning north of the border.

The goalkeeper should be in-form Frenchman Giles Rousset, a recent signing this year from Rennes. At 32, he is just reaching his prime for this position and his 6 foot 5 inch frame should prove an imposing sight but you would expect him to look about half that size as he doubles over to

pluck the ball from the back of the net!

For the Glasgow boys, who's the likely star on the big stage? Well, Rangers really! With the depth of their squad and the class of the players they've signed in recent times creating an embarrassment of riches to

night" extravaganza at the Greenwood Tree Hotel (Oxford St, Paddington — opposite the barracks and next to the Hospital). The game will be shown live on the big screen and I might even venture out to watch the game there myself.

Knowing some of the



Brian Laudrup: A member of Rangers' "who's who".

say the least, they can burst poor old Hearts in almost every position.

The team is literally a "who's who": Gascoigne, Laudrup, McCoist, Gough, Dure, Steven, Salenko, Bo Anderson, Goram etc. You would expect Gascoigne to have a strong game and McCoist is nearing the end of his playing days perhaps, but his eye for goal is unnerving at times.

He'll want one last "big game" if rumours are to be believed that he will indeed take up a coaching position when he finally decides to retire. He is only 33 and could perhaps stay on for another year or so at this level, with the lure of yet another crack at the European Cup next year after winning the title again this term. I'm certain the followers of the club will want their favourite son ON the field as opposed to "directing traffic" off it in 1996/97.

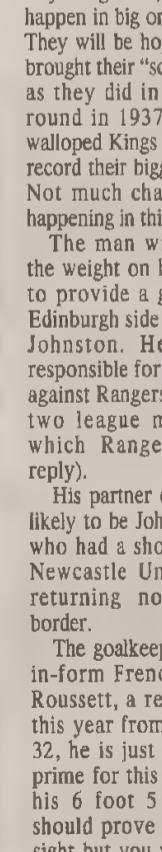
The Glasgow Rangers Supporters Club will be holding their "Cup Final

guys, it promises to be a great night — win, lose or draw — a night for football fans to enjoy in a relaxed atmosphere.

So, we come down to the crux of the matter, who will win the cup? Heart says like most people, (wonder if that's an omen?), I'd love the underdogs to get up but head rules the roost and it has to be Rangers.

At time of writing, I predicted Liverpool to win by two clear goals last weekend (not knowing the result at this time as it's only Thursday) and feel that Rangers will most likely do even better, 3-0 or 4-1 will not be too great a risk to take, although when it comes down to it, the best team on the day will win, whether it be the Gers of Glasgow or the "Jam Tarts" of Edinburgh.

All we can hope for is an exciting, friendly game, plenty of action, plenty of goals and the best of Scottish to all concerned.



John Robertson: Will he be good enough to trouble the Rangers defence?

SCOTTISH FA CUP FINAL 1996

Heartless Rangers to win Cup as well

The Road to Hampden

3RD RD: SATURDAY, JANUARY 27 1996

Keith v Rangers 1-10
Rangers scorers: Ferguson 2,20,49 Cleland
13,15,28 Durie 45p
Robertson 47 Miller 62 Michailichenko 87
Attendance: 14,000

3RD RD: TUESDAY, JANUARY 30 1996

Hearts v Partick Thistle 1-0
Hearts scorers: Ritchie 63
Attendance: 13,770

4TH RD: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15 1996

Clyde v Rangers 1-4
Rangers scorers: Miller 66,74 Van Vossen 80
Gascoigne 82
Attendance: 5,772

4TH RD: SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17 1996

Kilmarnock v Hearts 1-2
Hearts scorers: Ritchie 54 Berry 79
Attendance: 15,173

Q/F: SATURDAY, MARCH 9 1996

Caledonian Thistle v Rangers 0-3
Rangers scorers: Thomson 15 o.g.
Gascoigne 35,52
Attendance: 12,000

Q/F: THURSDAY, MARCH 7 1996

St Johnstone v Hearts 1-2
Hearts scorers: Lawrence 45 McPherson 56
Attendance: 9,945

S/F: SUNDAY, APRIL 7 1996

Celtic v Rangers 1-2
Rangers scorers: McCoist 43 Laudrup 66
Attendance: 36,333

S/F: SATURDAY, APRIL 6 1996

Aberdeen v Hearts 1-2
Hearts scorers: Robertson 80 Johnston 90
Attendance: 27,785

THE FACTS

*Rangers have not played a match at home in this run but have a very impressive tally of: FOR 19 AGAINST 3

*Hearts have played just the one game at home (v Partick Thistle 3rd rd) and a record of: FOR 7 AGAINST 3

*Although the "against" record of Hearts is a carbon copy to that of Rangers, they have had the harder run to the final having met three Premier Division sides (Rangers not meeting one until the semi-final clash with Celtic).

*The "goals for" column is the big one and Rangers simply have far too much power in that depth.

*It probably won't be a stroll in the park but the Gers should take the cup in their stride but cup shocks do happen of course.

DUBLIN, SCOTLAND

Celtic has called for drastic changes in Scottish soccer, including a possible breakaway to link with clubs from Ireland and the temporary abolition of relegation.

Chief executive Fergus McCann said in a British magazine interview, "I'd like to see some imaginative thinking. For us it's a quality league or a possible breakaway."

"Celtic need a competitive league and while people might think we would be happy with a league we dominate with Rangers, that is not so."

McCann added: "I don't mind revenue-sharing within a league, so long as it is a good league and I don't see why we shouldn't think about admitting a team from

Dublin and another from Belfast."

Manager Tommy Burns told Scot FM radio last week, "I think we should do away with relegation for two or three years and let people play the game as they would like to play it."

"Chairmen are putting too much pressure on their managers to succeed, insisting at all times that the clubs have got to be in the premier league or it will cost them so much money."

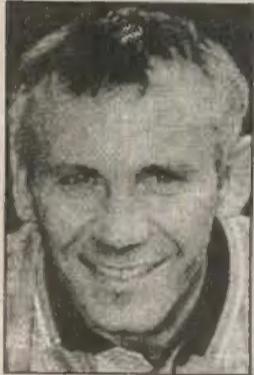
"Two or three clubs are fighting for the championship while the rest are in fear of their premier division lives."

Celtic finished runner-up in this season's premier league to Glasgow city rival Rangers, who won the title for the eighth season in succession.

Reid — best boss

Sunderland's Peter Reid (below) was named last week as English soccer's manager of the year.

Reid's achievement of winning promotion from



division one for Sunderland on a shoestring budget was put ahead of Alex Ferguson's premier league success with Manchester United.

Reid, who has steered Sunderland to the first division title just a year after it was almost relegated, was handed the League Managers Association's top award at a dinner near London.

The association's chief executive Gordon Milne said: "The collective opinion was that Peter made the best possible use of the resources available to him."

Ferguson was named premier league manager of the year.

Lower than bottom

An English pub soccer team was last week trying to look on the bright side of life - after ending the season with a minus points tally.

The Stanford Arms managed just one draw in 18 games in the Lowestoft Sunday League division one in Suffolk.

That solitary point was then wiped out when league officials deducted three points after the club called a game off because it could not field a full team.

But, despite being relegated to division two, the players refuse to be downhearted.

"There's always next season," said Stanford Arms landlord Brian Cook.

George Graham Returns



George Graham (above) received a hero's welcome from the Arsenal faithful last week when he returned to Highbury for the first time since being sacked by the Gunners 14 months ago.

Graham — banned for a year by the Football Association, who found him guilty of accepting illegal payments in two transfer deals — attended Paul Merson's testimonial as a member of the Gunners' 1971 League and

Cup double-winning side.

The heroes of 25 years ago paraded their League and Cup trophy at half-time in the match between an Arsenal XI and an International XI.

And that provided a large section of the 31,626 crowd with the opportunity to chant the name of the man who, as Highbury manager, brought home a string of honours, including two Championships and the European Cup Winners' Cup.

Merson, whose Arsenal side beat their guests 8-5, said of his former boss: "I was pleased that he came tonight and I am sure that with his record he will now get back into management and be successful all over again."

The England forward, has bounced back from a well documented drink, drugs and gambling nightmare.

TEL'S PITCH WORRY

England's friendly against China in Beijing on May 23 is still on but manager Terry Venables has called for repairs to the Workers' Stadium pitch, the English Football Association (F.A.) said last week.

"Terry saw the pitch on Sunday and asked for some more work to be carried out," F.A. spokesman Steve Double said. "We don't regard the game as being in jeopardy at this stage."

Venables travelled to China after reports that the playing surface in Beijing was uneven and could cause injuries just weeks before the start of the European championships.

The F.A. has been criticised for organising a long-haul trip to Asia in the run-up to Euro 96.

GRANDAD PAYS 6 GRAND

Doting grandad George Porritt has shelled out \$16,000 (about \$A11,500) so his 11-year-old grandson can play in a charity soccer match alongside some of the game's legends.

Porritt gave the money to Leyton Orient FC so James Scholey can line up opposite legendary players George Best and Sir Stanley Matthews.

Local soccer fans were invited to bid for the pleasure of playing in the charity game at the Brisbane Road ground in East London on Sunday and Porritt came up with the highest offer.

Boxing promoter and Leyton Orient chairman Barry Hearn said: "Everyone is delighted that George is prepared to bid so much money for his young grandson."

"We all hope James is going to have a fantastic day and it would be marvellous if he could score a goal. I'll be taking part as well and I look forward to playing alongside him."

Premier League Team

PROFILES

QUEENS PARK RANGERS

Jurgen Sommer (G) — Born New York in 1964. Started in England at Luton Town before moving to QPR this season. Had loan spells at Brighton and Torquay United.

Tony Roberts (G) — Born Bangor in 1969. Started as a trainee at QPR, Roberts is now a regular reserve keeper at Loftus Road.

Rufus Brevett (D) — Born 1969 in Derby. Trainee at Doncaster before playing over 100 league games for them. Moved to QPR.

Alan McDonald (D) — Born Belfast in 1963. Northern Ireland captain. Started at QPR where he has played over 300 league games. Had a brief loan spell at Charlton.

Steve Yates (D) — Born 1970 in Bristol. Trainee at Bristol Rovers where he played in the first team 200 times. Then moved to QPR.

Karl Ready (D) — Born Neath in 1972. Trainee at QPR who has made the first grade in the last couple of seasons.

David Bardsley (D) — Born Manchester in 1964. Apprentice at Blackpool where he made his first team debut before joining Watford and then Oxford. Then moved to QPR. Former England player.

Matthew Brazier (D) — Born Whipp Cross in 1976. Trainee at QPR only recently been involved in the first team.

Simon Barker (M) — Born 1964 in Farnworth. Apprentice at Blackburn where he played in the league nearly 200 times before moving to QPR.

Paul Murray (M) — Born Carlisle in 1976. He was a Carlisle boy through and through before two months ago joining QPR. Great prospect.

Ray Wilkins (M) — Born Hillingdon in 1956. Apprentice at Chelsea and played near on 200 games for them. Moved to Manchester United then AC Milan, Paris St Germain, Rangers, QPR and then had a brief spell at Crystal Palace before returning to QPR as player / manager.

Andrew Impey (M/F) — Born Hammersmith in 1971. Grew up as an Arsenal fan. Played for Yeading before moving to QPR.

Trevor Sinclair (F/M) — Born Dulwich in 1973. He first played for Blackpool where he had been a trainee. Then chose QPR over some of the bigger clubs in England.

Kevin Gallen (F) — Born Hammersmith in 1975. A brief walk from Loftus Road. He was a trainee at QPR and in the reserves broke all sorts of goal scoring records, but did not really bring his golden boots into the first team.

Daniele Dichio (F) — Born London in 1974. Trainee at QPR, Dichio had one loan spell at Barnet. Could play for England or Italy (that's if they chose him).

Mark Hateley (F) — Joined the club this season from Scottish champions Rangers but never got into the scoring action. Has had spells in France and is a former England player. His father was also a league player.



Trevor Sinclair: Yet another Rangers find destined for a bigger club.

RATINGS OF ENGLISH GROUNDS

TEAM	WEST BROMWICH ALBION	WEST HAM	WIGAN
GROUND ADDRESS	The Hawthorns West Bromwich B71 4LF	Boleyn Ground Green St, Upton Park London E13 9AZ	Springfield Park Wigan WN6 7BA
CAPACITY	25,100	26,014	6,674
RECORD GATE	64,815 (1937)	42,322 (1970)	27,500 (1987)
GROUND DEBUT	1900	1904	1932
BY RAIL	Rolle Street, Smethwick	Barking BR, Upton Park (Tube)	Wallgate and North Western
COMMENTS	Nice ground that is certainly PL quality. Shame the team did not finish that well so that this ground could be in the PL.	Fantastic improvements. The Bobby Moore and Centenary Stand are amazing. The atmosphere at the ground is the BEST in the PL.	Don't get confused and go to the Rugby League Ground! This ground needs improvement. It's not one of the better grounds in Division 3.
ACCESSIBILITY	3.5	4.5	2.5
RATING /5			
OVERALL GROUND	7.5	8	6
RATING /10			

BIGGER CROWDS

The success story of English Premier League continued this season with another massive increase in crowds.

Figures released last week revealed a 13.5 per cent increase on last season and average match attendances rose from 24,271 to 27,550.

This represents an increase of almost 30 per cent on the first year of the Premier League in 1992-93.

The average attendance this season at 17 clubs showed an increase with only Manchester United — due to building works — Leeds and Sheffield Wednesday showing a slight fall.

The biggest increases were at new Premier League teams Middlesbrough and Bolton, plus Wimbledon.

WILKINS TO STAY

Clive Berlin will take over as chairman at relegated Premiership side QPR it was announced last Friday.

He replaces Paul Thompson who put the club up for sale last week.

Thompson, son of food and racing tycoon David whose fortune has been estimated at around \$A270 million, is thought to be interested in buying this season's League Cup finalist Leeds.

QPR supporters had hoped to tempt Chris Wright, the 50-year-old millionaire chairman of media company Chrysalis, into buying the club.

Wright, who also has a successful racing and horse breeding operation, always said he would take over if the club was sold for a 'sensible' price.

However, Wright found Thompson's price too much.

Thompson's departure could have a bearing on the future of manager Ray Wilkins, who had been assured that he did not need to sell any of QPR's emerging talent like England squad member Trevor Sinclair following their relegation to the first division.

YORK SURVIVE

York's 3-1 away victory over Brighton last week preserved its English second division status and sent Carlisle down instead.

York came from behind to win with second half goals from Gary Bull, who'd been on loan earlier in the season at Brighton, Paul Stephenson and Scott Jordan.

City, which needed a point or at least three goals to ensure safety in this game rescheduled after a pitch invasion forced the game to be abandoned last month, had gone behind to a 25 metre effort from Craig Maskell in the 19th minute.

BACK TO THE MADHOUSE

Trevor Francis has accepted an offer to become the new manager of English Division One club Birmingham, where he started his playing career as a 16-year-old boy wonder.

Francis said last week he had accepted Birmingham joint-owner David Sullivan's offer of a three-year contract to succeed Barry Fry, who was sacked earlier last week.

The former Queens Park Rangers and Sheffield Wednesday boss admits in an interview with the daily Mirror, however: "People will think I am crackers."

"I am voluntarily going back into the madhouse and I know a lot of my managerial colleagues will think I am crazy."

"Birmingham have always been very special to me for obvious reasons but it needed more than just an affinity with the place and supporters to attract me back," he said.

"I always felt I'd like to be a boss again, as long as it was with ambitious, go-ahead club who matched my desire to achieve things."

And Birmingham fit the bill perfectly."

The 42-year-old former England striker, who became Britain's first million pound (\$A1.91 million) player when he moved to Nottingham Forest from Birmingham in 1979, said Sullivan had "made it clear he will back me generously in the transfer market."



Trevor Francis: Returns to where he began his career — as boss.

PINK CELLS FOR HOOLIGANS



Any people arrested for trouble in or around St James' Park next month can make dubious history of a sort — by becoming the first hooligans to end up in Europe's first all-purpose soccer ground prison.

An on-site "custody suite" has been opened at St James' Park, the home of Newcastle

United, where fans causing trouble during the European championship can be held in one of five cells, painted pastel shades of pink and green.

"We're told by psychiatrists the pink and green have a soothing effect," said Eric Williams, football liaison officer for Northumbria police. "But when 36,000 fans are shouting in the stands above the cells, the prisoners still get pretty agitated," he said.

"We've got an up-and-running police station on-site, where people who are arrested at the matches are taken to be photographed, searched, fingerprinted and questioned," said Williams.

Security is a top priority for the biggest sporting



Alan Stubbs: Chosen over world-class defenders.

RECORD SIGNING

Scottish Premier Division side Celtic signed Bolton defender Alan Stubbs for a club record fee of \$A6.72 million last week.

Announcing the signing at the Glasgow club's ground, manager Tommy Burns said: "I have considered all the top central defenders in the world and Alan Stubbs is the one we wanted."

Stubbs had been linked with several top English clubs in the last 18 months and a proposed \$A7.67 million transfer to Blackburn fell through last year at the last moment.

Bolton's relegation from the Premier Division made a move for Stubbs a certainty although the front-runners for his signature had appeared to be Arsenal.

Celtic's previous record signing was Andreas Thom, a \$A4.23 million buy from Bayer Leverkusen last year.

McSTAY OUT OF EURO 96

Celtic captain Paul McStay (right) was ruled out of Scotland's squad last week for next month's European championship because of an ankle injury.

Eoin Jess of Coventry, will replace him in Craig Brown's 22-man squad.

McStay, 31, who has 73 caps, the joint-third highest capped Scot of all time, has to have an operation on the ankle and will not recover in time for the opening round games against Netherlands, England and Switzerland at Wembley and Villa Park.

Brown immediately recalled former Aberdeen midfielder Jess, who last week was left out of the squad for the final warm-up tour of North America.

Jess won the last of his 10 caps when scoring for Scotland against San Marino last November.

Now he is line for his first major championships at the age of 25.

"America gives me a chance to impress and you can't ask for any more than that," he said.



Champions, promotions, relegations and play-offs

England Premier League

Champions - Manchester United
Qualify for European competition:
Manchester United, Newcastle, Liverpool, Aston Villa, Arsenal
Relegated: Bolton, Queens Park Rangers, Manchester City

First Division

Champions - Sunderland
Also promoted - Derby
Play-offs (for promotion): Crystal Palace, Stoke, Leicester, Charlton.
Relegated: Luton, Watford, Millwall.

Second Division

Champions - Swindon.
Also promoted - Oxford.
Play-offs (for promotion): Blackpool, Notts County, Crewe, Bradford.
Relegated - Hull, Brighton, Swansea plus Carlisle

Third Division

Champions - Preston North End
Also promoted - Gillingham, Bury
Play-offs (for promotion) - Plymouth, Darlington, Hereford, Colchester
Bottom: Torquay

Scotland Premier Division:

Champions - Rangers
Relegated - Falkirk
Play-offs: Partick

Division One:

Champions - Dunfermline
Play-offs - Dundee United
Relegated - Hamilton, Dumbarton

Division Two:

Champions - Stirling
Promoted - East Fife
Relegated: Montrose, Forfar

Division Three:

Champions - Livingston
Promoted - Brechin

ENGLISH FA CUP FINAL

Cantona spat on

England Football Association chief executive Graham Kelly has launched an immediate inquiry into two incidents at the end of Manchester United's 1-0 FA Cup final defeat of Liverpool at Wembley last Saturday.

United captain Eric Cantona, who scored the only goal, was spat on and someone aimed a punch at manager Alex Ferguson as the winning side made their way up the famous 39 steps to collect the trophy.

"It's totally unacceptable," Kelly said. "I am very concerned about the situation and we will be reviewing the matter urgently with Wembley."

"Clearly there was a problem today with players walking past rival fans. I have already spoken to Wembley and we will be looking at the matter in some depth."

Given the long-standing hostility between the clubs' fans, it was ludicrous that United's players had to run a gauntlet through the Liverpool supporters to collect the trophy.

Ferguson shrugged the incidents aside as he said: "Don't bother about that, there was nothing silly. If someone had a swing at me he obviously doesn't know how good I am at fighting."



Alex Ferguson: Good fighter

Expensive stolen tickets

A group of 50 South Africans flew on an organised trip to London for the FA Cup final and were turned away because they had stolen tickets.

The group, from Johannesburg, arrived at Wembley for the Manchester United-Liverpool final and discovered they couldn't join the other 79,007 fans in the 80,000-capacity stadium.

"When we got to the ground and handed in our tickets, security said 'will you come with us'. They took us to a little section where we were handed a letter to say these tickets were stolen and we were not allowed to see the game," group spokesman Ivor Lazerson said.

Lazerson said the trip was booked in South Africa through an established travel agency and the group had no reason to believe they would not see the game.

"People spent a lot of money to come here. If you just look at air fare, ticket and accommodation, you're looking at 1500-2000 pounds (\$2800-\$3,800). It wasn't as if someone had gone to a tout (scalper)"

DOUBLE WINNERS

Teams that have won the English FA Cup and the English first division league in the same year

1889	Preston North End
1897	Aston Villa
1961	Tottenham Hotspur
1971	Arsenal
1986	Liverpool
1994	Manchester United
1996	Manchester United

How the teams lined-up

LIVERPOOL: David James, Jason McAteer, Mark Wright, Phil Babb, John Scales, Rob Jones (substitute Michael Thomas 87th), Steve McManaman, John Barnes, Jamie Redknapp, Robbie Fowler, Stan Collymore (Ian Rush 74th).

MANCHESTER UNITED: Peter Schmeichel, Denis Irwin, David May, Gary Pallister, Phillip Neville, Roy Keane, David Beckham (Gary Neville 89th), Nicky Butt, Ryan Giggs, Andy Cole (Paul Scholes 63rd), Eric Cantona.

REFEREE: Dermot Gallagher.

CROWD: 79,007.

MANCHESTER UNITED 1
LIVERPOOL 0

BY ROBERT MILLWARD OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Frenchman Eric Cantona scored Manchester United's winner five minutes from the end in a 1-0 FA Cup final victory over Liverpool last Saturday and then collected the famous trophy as captain.

The Frenchman, the first overseas player to captain an FA Cup final team, fired a hip-high shot through a crowded penalty area after Liverpool goalkeeper David James had punched out a corner from David Beckham.

The goal created history as United became a record ninth winner of the title and also the first team to complete the league and cup double on two occasions.

It also completed an amazing season for the Frenchman who spent the first three months under suspension after his kung-fu style attack on a Crystal Palace fan last season.

Cantona, who scored on his return to the game against Liverpool in October, went on to net 17 more, wound up United's top scorer and helped Alex



Duchess of Kent, "It's up and down."

United's manager Alex Ferguson admitted he was amazed that his team had scored a double triumph again.

"It is absolutely fantastic to win the double twice in three seasons and perhaps it was a bit beyond my expectations," Ferguson said.

"I thought we would have a chance in the league but the double? No way, I didn't



think we would last the pace."

Cantona was named



David James: His clearance went straight to Cantona.

Ferguson's team make up Newcastle's 12-point standings lead on the way to its third league title in four years.

"That's life," Cantona said just before walking up to collect the cup from the

Cantona's late strike was

the only goal of a disappointing final which had promised much but delivered little. A noisy Wembley crowd of 79,007 saw a game littered with errors and few goal chances even though James had to make two good saves to keep out shots from Beckham and Cantona.

Andy Cole had an early chance to fire United ahead in the third minute from Cantona's header into his path. But the striker completely miscued his shot from 15 metres and the ball rolled slowly well wide of the post.

It was that sort of game with mistakes all over the field and it never lived up to its promise.

Two minutes after Cole's blunder, James had to make an acrobatic diving save, plunging to his right to turn a well-struck 20-metre shot from Beckham round the post.

When a United attack broke down on the edge of the Liverpool penalty area, a slick move almost brought a goal for Stan Collymore in the 13th minute. He broke down the right and powered an angled shot that United goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel fisted around the near post.

Apart from two Collymore shots that were far too high and another from Jamie Redknapp that also flew high over the United crossbar, there were few other goal attempts in the first half.

But Cantona brought the best out of James five minutes into the second half.

With the Liverpool defence under pressure, the Frenchman produced a first time shot while on the ground but the agile goalkeeper made an instinctive one-handed save at the foot of the post. James then forced out a follow up effort by Cole, who later was replaced by Paul Scholes after another shaky performance in front of goal.

With the game heading for a goalless stalemate and a replay, Liverpool sent on veteran striker Ian Rush 16 minutes from the end for his last appearance in place of Collymore. But the former Juventus striker made little impact and rarely had the ball.

The goal came when Liverpool defender Phil Babb needlessly gave away a corner with James coming off his line to collect a loose United pass.

Beckham swung the ball to the near post, James rushed off his line to punch and the ball went straight to Cantona. There were four defenders between the Frenchman and the net but he managed to fire his shot through all of them for the winner.

Eric calls England his home

French striker Eric Cantona (right) said last Saturday that he had always felt he wanted to stay in England after his controversial attack on a Crystal Palace fan last year which led to an eight-month suspension.

The Manchester United ace also said he would remain in England, possibly as a manager, after his playing career ends, and he expressed mixed feeling about a possible late call-up to the French national side for this summer's European Championships.

In a BBC television interview screened in the run-up to the FA Cup final against Liverpool last week, the mercurial Cantona said that even though he retreated to France after his kung-fu attack on the Crystal Palace fan, he always wanted to return to England.

As Manchester United supporters everywhere held their breath wondering whether he would ever return, United boss Alex Ferguson made a desperate flight to France to persuade his star to return.

Cantona told BBC presenter Des Lynam he never really had any doubt.

"He just asked me if I wanted to leave English football because he knew it was a very difficult time for me but I just said 'No'."

"He didn't try to persuade me because he wanted me to stay but it was only if I wanted to stay."

"I was close to signing for someone else because I didn't know if Manchester United wanted me to stay."

"I received a lot of criticism and they did too."

And so well has Cantona and his family come through the crisis that they had no real intention of returning to France even when his contract with United is up in two years' time.

"I will maybe be a manager, here in England. Yes I will stay here in England."

"I will stay for my children because now they are at school here, they have all their friends here, they are very happy here."

Cantona said he would be happy to play for France this summer if asked but equally would welcome a holiday before the new league champions begin their campaign in the Champions League next season.

"I need a holiday because it's a long season in England and it's the Champions League next season," he said.

"I think the Champions League is very important for Manchester United next season. We all want to win it. It's important for English football, important for Manchester United," he said.

"If you just win in your country, there's no credit. I think all the players who don't play in European Champions will have an advantage."

"I will be happy if I play (for France). If I don't, I will have a holiday and I will be fit next season."

The thoughtful Frenchman believes the challenge of next season could be crucial in the development of the young United squad who played so well this season.

"The young players have been wonderful but the most important season for them is next season. It will be most difficult after they have won the championship."

Cantona also disclosed that he is not his eldest son's idol. Goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel is.

"His idol is Peter, ever since he was three or four years old. He was his idol, not me."

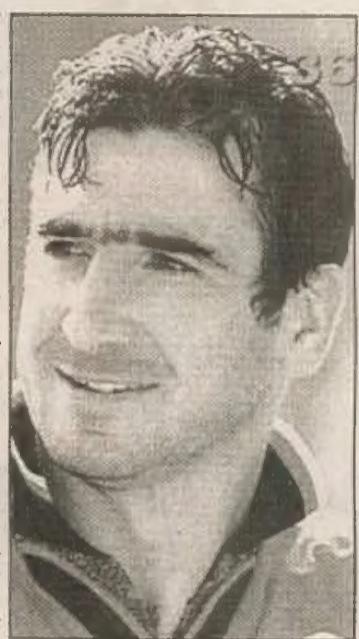
"I'm just his friend. I want my son to be my friend because I love him."

Defending the English game, Cantona said he felt that the technique here is the best in Europe "but if you speak about entertainment, creativity — maybe they have to work more."

He feels he has come through the bad times and emerged as a calmer person, while denying that the fan incident has changed him.

"I am very confident always. I'm not arrogant like people say, I'm just confident about myself."

"No, I don't think I have really changed, not really. I just do what I've always done. I just try to live in harmony with myself and perhaps that is the reason for the way I now play."



WEEKEND MATCH PROGRAM



ERICSSON CUP TOP SIX
CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES



MATCH A MINOR SEMI FINAL

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15

ADELAIDE CITY

v

SYDNEY UNITED

Hindmarsh Stadium 7.30PM

PRELIMINARY FINAL

SUNDAY, MAY 19

MARCONI FAIRFIELD

v

MINOR SEMI-FINAL WINNER

Parramatta Stadium 3.00PM

GRAND FINAL

SUNDAY, MAY 26

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

v

PRELIMINARY FINAL WINNER

Olympic Park 3.00PM



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Students — \$6 Aged Pensions — \$6
Children 8-16 — \$3 Children Under 8 — Free

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